

VILLAGE STABILITY OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN:
COMPARING PAST COUNTERINSURGENCIES
FOR FUTURE APPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

VILLAGE STABILITY OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN: COMPARING PAST COUNTERINSURGENCIES FOR FUTURE APPLICATIONS, by Major Kristoffer T. Mills, 144 pages.

Village Stability Operations (VSO) has been the cornerstone counterinsurgency strategy and primary mission for U.S. Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan since 2010. The VSO program has drawn criticism for human rights violations committed by the Afghan Local Police and poor reception by much of the Afghan population. Despite setbacks in the VSO, areas in rural Afghanistan, once safe havens for insurgents, have experienced increased security and stability.

This thesis compares the Philippines War (1899-1902) and the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) to VSO in Afghanistan along the areas of security, governance, and development. The comparison studies two considerably successful counterinsurgencies to VSO in order to examine the practices, and procedures to determine why and how the case studies were successful.

As the U.S. draws down military forces from Afghanistan in 2014, it is imperative to analyze the effectiveness of the VSO. Lessons from the VSO model can be directly applied by USSOF and conventional forces to other operations to include nation assistance, security force assistance, foreign internal defense, and counterterrorism. Given the current and future operational environments, fiscal constraints, and public opposition of mass deployments, the VSO model is relevant to counter complex problems throughout the world.

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ACRONYMS

ADP	Army Doctrine Publication
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
AFPAK	Afghanistan Pakistan
ALP	Afghan Local Police
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
CA	Civil Affairs
CJSOTF-A	Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CPM	Communist Party of Malaya
CST	Cultural Support Team
DC	District Center
DCOP	District Chief of Police
DGOV	District Governor
DST	District Support Team
FET	Female Engagement Team
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FM	Field Manual
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IDAD	Internal Defense and Development
ISAF	International Security Assistance Forces

JP	Joint Publication
MISO	Military Information Support Operations
MOI	Ministry of the Interior
ODA	Operational Detachment Alpha
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
SF	Special Forces (aka US Army Green Berets)
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SOF	Special Operations Forces
USAID	U.S Agency for International Development
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USMARSOC	United States Marine Special Operations Command
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
USSOF	United States Special Operations Forces
VSO	Village Stability Operations
VSP	Village Stability Platform

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.

— T. E. Lawrence, *Twenty-Seven Articles*

Village Stability Operations in Afghanistan

In July 2010, Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan, announced the approval of the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program as a formal security initiative within the Afghan Ministry of the Interior (MOI).¹ Although, this announcement formalized the establishment of the Afghan Local Police (ALP), the announcement also coincided with the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) adopting a new counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy which came to be called Village Stability Operations (VSO). Village Stability Operations (VSO) actually began in late 2009 when United States Special Operations Forces (USSOF) counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy focused on stabilizing local villages in rural areas in Afghanistan. The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) considered Village Stability Operations (VSO) a successful approach to counterinsurgency (COIN) operations and developed the Village Stability Operations (VSO) methodology as a counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy adaptive to the “gaps and seams” in rural areas throughout Afghanistan. The Village Stability Operations (VSO) methodology is designed to increase the security, development, and governance capacities at the village level and connect the local population to the district governance. Village Stability Operations (VSO) evolved from

previous strategies employed by U.S. Army Special Forces (SF) “Green Berets” in which local Afghans were trained and equipped to defend their own villages. U.S. Special Forces (SF) Operational Detachment–Alpha (ODA) Teams have been successfully conducting manifestations of VSO in southern and eastern Afghan provinces prior to the announcements.

Since 2010, VSO has evolved since its inception to include not only Army Special Operations Forces (SOF), but U.S. Navy Special Warfare Teams (SEAL), and U.S. Marine Special Operations Forces (MARSOC). The heart of VSO is foreign internal defense (FID) which is defined in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* as: “participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency.” U.S. SOF), Psychological Operations (PSYOPS), Civil Affairs (CA) Teams (CAT), as well as Cultural Support Teams (CST) and Female Engagement Teams (FET), provide a supporting role to VSO and complement the FID task integral to the VSO methodology. Conventional military forces, particularly U.S. Army infantry units, have provided additional security for the conduct of VSO throughout Afghanistan. The SOF teams, in conjunction with the PSYOPS, CATs, CSTs, FETs, infantry units, as well as others, conduct VSO from a Village Stability Platform (VSP) which is a base of operations within, or adjacent to, a village, vary in size, with additional assets to support VSO. The exact composition of the VSP is dependent upon mission requirements, and may contain a full complement of support elements or may only consist of the USSOF team.

There have been several iterations of VSO throughout Afghanistan since 2010. The strategy has won over many proponents who believe VSO can be effective in defeating the Taliban while promoting traditional Afghan governmental systems at the village level while fostering support for the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). However, there is some debate to whether or not the VSO strategy is effective. Local Afghans also have their concerns about VSO, especially the empowerment of the Afghan Local Police (ALP) and the risk of corruption within the ranks of the local police force. VSO is a temporary solution to local security issues. The intent is not for U.S. forces to remain indefinitely or for an extended duration, but to gain access to a village, recruit local villagers for a local defense force, train and equip the ALP force, and then transition the responsibility of security to that local force. The Afghan Local Police (ALP) are to be absorbed by the Afghan National Police (ANP). The process and implementation of ANP taking responsibility for the training, administration, and support of Afghan Local Police (ALP) has varied throughout the provinces and districts in Afghanistan. Some districts and provinces have experienced greater success with the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program and the transition of ALP to ANP than other areas.

Among the major concerns of opponents is that the U.S. is potentially recruiting, training, equipping, and even empowering, Taliban members and insurgent fighters. Furthermore, there are arguments that this strategy was not developed or intended to be a long-term solution, but rather a short-term immediate program to address the Taliban and insurgents in remote rural areas in Afghanistan. Opponents to the ALP, to include VSO, fear that once the coalition forces depart that the ALP may be absorbed by the Taliban,

become local “warlords,” or simply fail to provide security. Another concern is whether or not the ANP will be able to assume responsibility for the ALP and absorb them into their ranks and fully integrate the ALP from a local village defense force to part of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) as part of the Afghan National Army (ANA).

In addition to the focus of improving security efforts through ALP recruitment, training, and mentorship, VSO also includes efforts to improve the local governance capacity and focused, sustainable development. VSO’s bottom-up approach is focused on linking the village government to the district government. This approach allows the lowest level of government in the village to participate in the next level of government with the district. There is a parallel between the village leadership and the ALP in that both are linked directly to the district government and the ANSF in that district.

Development in the areas of education, economics, infrastructure, agriculture, industry, among other development, is also a key component to the VSO methodology, however, significant development typically occurs following the establishment of security and a demonstrated willingness and ability for village leaders to participate in the governance and support the GIRoA. Development in the form of small projects that provide immediate humanitarian relief or addresses an immediate emergency is often used at the tactical level to gain access to villages that may be indifferent or reluctant to participate in the ALP program and support GIRoA. Ideally, development will be initiated through the ODA and/or CA teams. As conditions improve, infrastructure and capability assessments completed, and needs of the village identified, development will continue to expand and include involvement and support from other governmental organizations (GO), non-governmental organizations (NGO), international governmental

organizations (IGO), as well as coalition partners. In order to facilitate both governance and development, the US Department of State (DoS) usually provides a representative from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) who forms part of the District Support Team (DST). The DST often includes a member of Afghanistan/Pakistan (AFPAK) Hands (APH), and a cultural advisor, who serve as a liaison to the district government. In theory and practice, development is conducted simultaneously with security and governance, but significant development is a by-product of effective security and governance.

This thesis will explore whether or not the VSO strategy has proven effective in Afghanistan since its inception in 2009. The thesis will evaluate the strategy to determine if it is sustainable as Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) continues into its 13th year. The thesis will also attempt to determine if the VSO strategy could be an effective strategy in other geographic locations throughout the world. VSO provides a small footprint and in the current operational environment with severe economic constraints, VSO could be a viable solution to provide security and stability to vulnerable states.

This thesis will compare the historically successful counterinsurgencies of the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) and the Philippines War (1899-1902). Both of these counterinsurgencies are considered successful in defeating the respective insurgencies. Additionally, further comparison and even contrast to other counterinsurgencies may be necessary to determine if VSO can be considered successful in achieving improved security, increased governance capacity, and effective development in Afghanistan.

Research Questions

The primary research question of this thesis is: Has the Village Stability Operations (VSO) methodology been a successful counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy for CJSOTF-A in Afghanistan? The purpose of the thesis is to determine if VSO has been effective in Afghanistan in defeating the Taliban insurgency. The thesis will compare VSO to two historically successful COIN operations; Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) and the Philippines War (1899-1902). Comparisons will be made between VSO and the historical examples along the lines of effort of governance, development, and security, as well as other measures of effectiveness that can be derived from the research. Comparisons and contrasts will be made between the three COIN examples to more accurately determine the effectiveness of VSO and even postulate whether or not VSO can be migrated to other operational environments as an effective COIN strategy.

Secondary questions will identify any changes that may be necessary to improve VSO and determine the feasibility of using the VSO methodology to other COIN operations in different operational environments. The first secondary question is: what changes or modifications are necessary to make VSO more successful in Afghanistan? The second secondary question is: Can the VSO methodology and strategy be applied to other operational environments in current or future COIN operations?

Assumptions

The two definitive assumptions in this research is the validity that the Philippine War and the Malayan Emergency are truly “successful” counterinsurgencies. FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* specifically cites the effectiveness of COIN principles in Malaya by illustrating the importance in the use of local police and the integration of airpower.² FM

3-24 also states that the United States effectively defeated the Philippine insurgency at the beginning of the 20th century.³

The assumptions that the Philippine War and the Malayan Emergency are successful counterinsurgencies is valid from a military doctrine perspective since the conflicts are included in Army doctrinal manuals. Some scholars and military historians may argue that indeed neither of these conflicts are accurately defined as successful. The hesitations to define these historical examples as successes may be justified, the truth in the matters of counterinsurgencies is that the nature of counterinsurgency (COIN) is very complex and often misunderstood by those governments and militaries that participate in COIN operations. An excellent example of this is the elimination of the Baathist Party members in Iraq which resulted in not only created hundreds if not thousands of additional insurgents, but incapacitated the government of Iraq to provide basic public services to the Iraqi people. Successes in COIN are measured in small victories. Statistically, most counterinsurgencies conducted by the United States and European powers have undeniably been absolute military failures. In the records of history, the Malayan Emergency and the Philippine War emerge as two of the predominant COIN success stories in military history.

Limitations

The VSO strategy is a COIN strategy developed for Afghanistan and is not a classified program. However, a considerable amount of data and information is classified and therefore cannot be published without altering the classification of this paper. All sources and research is available as open source information available on the internet, libraries, or other research institutes. The information in this paper is strictly unclassified.

The pursuit of classified information from the any of the subordinate commands within USSOCOM would provide detailed and critical information about VSO, but would require increasing the classification of this paper to a higher security classification. By keeping this paper at an unclassified security classification, more people can benefit from the information provided and the conclusion from the research and analysis.

Another limitation is that COIN operations are very difficult to conduct and history has demonstrated that most counterinsurgencies are considerable failures. The Philippine War and the Malaya Emergency are the two most successful counterinsurgencies. The other consideration when comparing counterinsurgencies is that each COIN operation is different in the causes, approaches to resolve, and outcomes. Conversely, there are common themes among the counterinsurgencies in the Philippines, Malaya, and Afghanistan.

Determining metrics for measuring the success of VSO proved to be a challenge, particularly considering much of the pertinent data is classified. Therefore, the metrics used to determine whether VSO is successful will be historical examples of previously successful counterinsurgencies.

Scope and Delimitations

VSO is a bottom-up approach to link the village to the district government. This paper will focus on the significance of the village and district in Afghanistan. Correlations to the provincial government and national government will be determined when necessary, but the focus will be on the district and below. Although, VSO is a village level program, it has strategic implications. The effects of VSO on the operational

and strategic level will also be identified as a metric of VSO's effectiveness as a COIN strategy.

Significance of Study

VSO is a relatively new concept although manifestations of the strategy have existed in Afghanistan since the early years of OEF-A. The results of this study will support whether or not VSO has been an effective strategy in Afghanistan as part of a broader COIN strategy. The results of this paper will also provide vital information to the inquisitive scholar, soldier, statesman, or citizen simply interested in the topic of VSO. The greatest benefactors of this study will be the military persons, or civilians, scheduled to deploy or currently deployed to Afghanistan, especially those assigned to or supporting a unit participating in VSO. The other benefactors are the persons who have conducted VSO in Afghanistan. This paper provides insight to the successes and failures of VSO, and provides an evaluation of their contribution to COIN operations in Afghanistan. A consequential benefactor may be someone who might be able to apply the successes and lessons learned from VSO to other counterinsurgencies in different operational environments.

Summary and Conclusions

Counterinsurgency is undoubtedly a difficult military operation to plan and execute. Considering the historical track record of American counterinsurgencies, it is important to learn as a military institution how to improve COIN operations. It is also critical for the U.S. military's interagency partners to learn the lessons from current and recent COIN operations. Future operations for the military will definitely include COIN

operations as a mainstay of deployments and the interagency organization will continue to contribute to COIN efforts worldwide. A thorough evaluation of VSO enables the understanding of what tactics, techniques and procedures were successful, or failed, in Afghanistan. By comparing VSO in Afghanistan to past successful COIN operations in the Philippines and Malaya, it is possible to determine future applications of VSO. As coalition military forces and American military forces begin to redeploy from Afghanistan it is critical to capture lessons learned and critique the application of VSO as COIN strategy for the benefit of future operations.

¹Brian Pettit, “The Fight for the Village, Southern Afghanistan, 2010,” *Military Review* (May-June 2011), <http://www.dtic.mil/cgibin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA543053> (accessed 29 March 2013).

²Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, December 2006).

³*Ibid.*, 1-3.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

While there is no specific doctrine written for Village Stability Operations, there is abundant information available on the topic in the form of white papers, information papers, writings in professional journals, assessments from reputable organizations, testimonies from military and political leadership, and numerous articles from the media. Despite no specific doctrine written for VSO, the VSO methodology is adapted from current doctrine which is then directly applied to VSO. There is also growing amount of articles published by military service members who have participated in VSO during their respective deployments to Afghanistan. Those individuals are an excellent source of first-hand information about VSO, and have also participated in “living histories” which are available on the internet. An abundance of information reference subordinate topics directly related to VSO to include ALP, Afghan police reformation, and numerous historical references about COIN.

VSO is grounded in doctrine, particularly COIN doctrine. This thesis will also compare VSO to current COIN doctrine to determine whether or not supportive doctrine is applicable. The two primary doctrinal resources used for the purpose of research and comparison include Joint Publication 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (5 October 2009) and FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (15 December 2006). Both sources are used by the American military forces as the foremost doctrinal manuals for COIN operations. The U.S. Army FM 3-24 was the first revision of COIN doctrine since the Vietnam War and therefore serves as the predominant manual for COIN operations for the US Army.

In an attempt to limit any bias in the research, I searched for information critical of VSO. The Civil-Military Fusion Centre produces an Afghanistan Monthly Report. In the July 2011 edition titled, “Village Defence: Understanding the Afghan Local Police (ALP),” Lamer Weibke (2011) and Kathleen Hughes (2011) are very critical of the program and states that “the implementation of these procedures in rural village environments throughout Afghanistan has proven and continues to prove difficult.”¹ Local Afghans residing in villages that have concerns with the effectiveness of the ALP and VSO. Furthermore, there is a significant disconnect between the local village governments to the district governments throughout most of Afghanistan. As more villages accept ALP as their local security force, it becomes increasingly more important that the village and district governments become more unified. The forcing mechanism that may force district governments to become more involved and supportive of local governments could occur as local ALP are absorbed by the ANP.

The British Army Afghan COIN Centre published the “Policing Inteqal: Next Steps in Police Reform in Afghanistan, Final Report,” November 2010, provides another perspective from Afghan villagers which is important to understand and appreciate as the citizens are either the benefactors of an effective security program, or victims of a failing or corrupt security force. This report includes several interviews from Afghans who expressed their opinions about the ALP performance in their respective villages. The report data, obviously does not reflect experiences and opinions of all Afghans, does depict that there are significant problems within the ALP force. The report provides an example of how the implementation of local police failed in the country of Colombia. The report also provides several examples of how effective police forces were established

in India, Turkey, and in areas in Pakistan. It is critical to compare and contrast local police programs throughout the world. The contrast and comparison allows to more effectively evaluate the performance of VSO, and enables a more thorough analysis of the VSO strategy.

The expression “If you have seen one VSO, you have seen one VSO,”² is frequently expressed during conversations about VSO, and the term is also found written in some VSO source documents. The adage is very true. In the book, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902*, by Brian McAllister Linn could easily be writing about VSO in Afghanistan. The Philippines War has similarities to Afghanistan as tactics that the military employs in one location proved effective, in other locations, different tactics are necessary. Difference in personalities and local government systems also create unique systems within systems. Therefore, like the Philippines, each VSO in Afghanistan is unique, possess different problem sets, and solutions to those problems are complex and varied. Linn (1989) wrote the book using four geographic areas within the Philippines to convey what policies worked for the U.S. Army and what failed to pacify the population. Linn (1989) states that Filipino scholars have “demonstrated that Filipino guerrilla resistance varied from island to island, and even from province to province, in its origins, character, and ideology.”³ The isolated and dispersed terrain in the Philippines due to being an archipelago is similar to the same geographical impacts that the mountains have on Afghanistan, making the comparisons between the counterinsurgencies relevant. Linn (1989) also goes into thorough detail to provide the reader how the Army effectively conducted COIN operations throughout the Philippines, as well as explaining the tactics and techniques of the Filipino guerrillas.

One purpose in writing this thesis using historical analysis, is to provide an assessment of VSO for future applications. In the *Savage Wars of Peace: Case Studies of Pacification in the Philippines, 1900-1902*, Robert D. Ramsey, III, provides an overview of the Philippine War and explains how the U.S. Army was successful in the Philippines. Ramsey (2009) provides justification for studying history especially for in the profession of arms as lesson from the past can be applied to plan for the future. Ramsey (2009) further elaborates why it is possibly more important to actually publish historical documentation. Ramsey (2009) cites that Brigadier General James L. Collins, Jr., a former chief of military history, stated that if there had been organized material on the Philippine Insurrection “we could have saved ourselves a good deal of time and effort in Vietnam.”⁴ This statement clearly illustrates the importance of studying history and the significance of failing either read or publish lessons learned. Despite Captain John R.M. Taylor, 14th Infantry writing a five-volume account of the Philippine War, it was never printed and thus no one was able to read the account prior to or during the Vietnam War.⁵ The author also explains the importance of having expertise in certain fields, particularly in the area of how to run a colonial government.⁶ The expertise referenced is civil affairs, or “experts” who had training and knowledge about how to establish and manage a government. Most sources examined to date do not discuss enablers in VSO, it is important that CA, PSYOP, and other enablers are critical to VSO. The author understands the need for certain “experts” in the Philippines, and the lesson remains applicable over 100 years later in Afghanistan.

The United States Institute of Peace published a Special Report in August 2009 titled “Afghanistan’s Police: The Weak Link in Security Sector Reform.” This document

provides background and history on the Afghan National Police (ANP). The report is critical review of the ANP and provides a thorough explanation of the reasons for the shortcomings in the ANP. The report also provides recommendations how to address those shortcomings including training, employment, and reform of the police and judicial system.

Among one of the best documents that explains the VSO model is an *Inter-Agency Essay* titled “Preventing Conflict: Interagency Village Stability Operations Model” by Matthew Denny. This essay is a primary source document that explains the five-step framework for the VSO model which is shape, hold, build, expand and transition. The essay explains in detail each of these phases and the VSO tenets. The VSO tenets will be covered in detail in the research as a baseline to compare to the Malayan Emergency and the Philippine War counterinsurgencies. Denny (2012) also explains how the VSO is a whole-of-government approach that must include the interagency in order to be successful.⁷

Robert Hulslander (2012) and Jake Spivey (2012), military analysts on the Joint Staff, provide further historical background detail, and the evolution of VSO and the ALP programs.⁸ Similar to the previous source, Hulslander (2012) and Spivey (2012) also go into great detail about each phase of the VSO methodology; shape, hold, build, and transition.⁹ Hulslander (2012) and Spivey (2012) also provide specific examples of how VSO has been a successful strategy since the first VSPs were established. The authors conclude the document with the clarification that although principles of VSO may be applicable to other conflicts, that it may not be the ultimate solution to all insurgencies.

In “One Team’s Approach to Village Stability Operations,” by Rory Hanlin, (2011) the author provides a concise historical perspective of how one ODA conducted VSO. The perspective from an ODA and units practicing VSO is critical to understand the implementation, struggles, and successes of VSO. Hanlin (2011) shares his experiences to provide a thorough assessment of his team’s performance from preparation and training, to the actual execution and conduct of VSO. Hanlin (2011) provides details about his understanding of VSO principles and how his team applied those principles to governance, development, and security. Hanlin (2011) provides examples of how his team was successful in applying VSO methodology in order to ensure village security was effective. Hanlin (2011) explains how to apply the whole of government approach, and the reason why the whole-of-government approach is critical for local government in the village to the district government to progress forward. Hanlin’s (2011) candor and openness about VSO demonstrates how VSO can be successful and is a template for other VSPs at different locations.

Seth A. Shreckengast (2012) provides a thorough critique of VSO and the ALP from an author who has no VSO experience.¹⁰ Shreckengast (2012) presents his paper as an assessment of what he calls the “cornerstone of American COIN policy in Afghanistan.”¹¹ The paper is organized into four sections which provide an overview, an analysis of available information and research, a critique of VSO and ALP, and recommendations for improvement. The article provides important information that should not be entirely dismissed, but his research appears to be somewhat limited. Although the Shreckengast (2012) is an Army veteran of Afghanistan, his experience is not in VSO, but rather as a combat engineer squad leader and as an intelligence analyst.

Shreckengast (2012) makes some astute observations and recommendations for an author lacking VSO experience, but possesses an understanding of VSO and the ALP program.

Seth G. Jones (2010) is an author who has possesses an impressive repertoire as a scholar of Afghanistan. Jones (2010) served as a Plans Officer and Advisor to the Commanding General, USSOF in Afghanistan, is an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University and the U.S. Navy Postgraduate School, and wrote *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan*.¹² In the *Joint Forces Quarterly* article, "Community Defense in Afghanistan," Jones (2010) provides a historical account about the development of security forces in Afghanistan, and then illustrates the significance of previous tribal and local defense initiatives. Jones (2010) historical detail about previous local security initiatives dating to the 19th century to the Soviet invasion and the rise and fall of Taliban, provides further background to the history of local defense forces in Afghanistan.¹³ Jones (2010) emphasizes the whole of government approach to adequately address the myriad of problems in Afghanistan. Jones (2010) provides critical principles that must be followed and details the essential capabilities and characteristics of effective VSO thorough analysis and invaluable historical perspective of tribal and local security forces that is relevant for understanding VSO and ALP in Afghanistan.¹⁴

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Brian Petit, U.S. Army, writes in "The Fight for the Village" recognizes that the Afghan village is the fundamental social structure key to successfully defeating the Taliban in Afghanistan. LTC Petit (2011) understands the importance of the village populations to both the insurgents and to coalition forces and succinctly elaborates the significance of the Afghan population. LTC Petit's (2011) personal experience conducting VSO is obvious as he provides detailed observations

from VSO. LTC Petit (2011) emphasizes the importance of understanding Afghan culture and how cultural understanding can effectively influence the Afghan population. The article provides a population-centric article that focuses on the importance of the village in winning the fight in Afghanistan.

The international community is very interested in the VSO program, particularly the ALP as the program was designed as a temporary solution to address local and village security concerns. Rebecca Barber of Oxfam International, wrote a Joint Briefing Paper titled, “No Time to Lose: Promoting the Accountability of the Afghan National Security Forces,” critical of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and recommended that the ALP program be cancelled.¹⁵ Barber’s (2011) critique of the ANSF is focused on the violation of human rights and lack of oversight.¹⁶ Barber (2011) provides several examples of how the Taliban and former *mujahedeen* have infiltrated the ranks of the ALP.¹⁷ Barber (2011) also states that the ALP, as a whole, abuse their authority and are not subject to the same punishment as other ANSF components.¹⁸ Barber (2011), although extremely critical of ALP, deserves some credit for highlighting the failings of the ALP program and for discrediting the established Afghan system of the *shura*.¹⁹ Barber’s (2011) brief illustrates the problems associated with the ALP, cites multiple accounts of ALP abuse of power, and provides recommendations to the international community and the government of Afghanistan on how to improve the ANSF and ALP.²⁰

Although VSO is not specifically identified in current doctrine, there is existing doctrine that is applicable to VSO. VSO is essentially counterinsurgency operations, which the U.S. military has been conducting in Afghanistan since 2001. Several doctrinal publications have been produced which facilitate the implementation of VSO and

promotes improved understanding of VSO. These doctrinal sources include Joint Publications (JP), Field Manuals (FM), Army Doctrine Publications (ADP), and Army Doctrine Resource Publications (ADRP). Among the most relevant doctrine applicable to COIN are the *Counterinsurgency* series of Joint Publications (JP) and Field Manuals (FM). Joint Publication (JP) 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* is doctrine written for joint forces to include the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. Field Manual (FM) 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* is the primary doctrinal manual for the Army and Marine Corps Field Manual (FM) 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* provides the doctrinal framework for COIN operations, best practices, and includes vignettes, historical COIN examples, glossary, and annotated bibliography for further research.²¹ Field Manual (FM) 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* is of special significance because the manual was the first Army COIN doctrine to be written in 20 years. At the time of the manual's publication, the United States was fully engaged in COIN in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2 *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, April 2009, compliments the FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* by providing more detailed information about considerations for planning COIN operations. FM 3-24.2 *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* provides greater detail in understanding the theory, considerations, tactics, techniques, and procedures for COIN operations.²²

Major Timothy R. Mungie (2010) wrote a monograph that provides historical analysis of the use of "indigenous police."²³ Mungie's (2010) analysis of the Malayan Emergency, the Philippine Insurrection of 1899, and the ANSF in Afghanistan is directly relevant to this thesis. Mungie's (2010) work does not include VSO or ALP in the context of his monograph, but the information reference Malaya and the Philippines is invaluable

in gaining a better understanding of local police forces during those respective counterinsurgencies.

The Malayan Emergency is one of two historical examples used to conduct an historical analysis and comparison of VSO. Noel Barber's, *The War of the Running Dogs: How Malaya Defeated the Communist Guerrillas 1948-60*, is a primary source from which to gain a better historical and detailed understanding of the Malayan Emergency. Barber (2004) is an acclaimed British writer who has also covered conflicts in Morocco and Hungary. This book will be used as another historical reference as the author interviewed multiple persons who participated on both sides of the conflict ranging from politicians, military leaders, Malay policemen, farmers, planters, miners, and former Communists. The thorough and wide-range of characters in the book provides ample information about the Malaya Emergency that will enable a detailed comparison of the conflict to VSO.

In continuing to gain as much information about Malaya, it is important to take into accounts from non-Westerners. Cheah Boon Kheng served as the Visiting Professor at the History Department, National University of Singapore in Kent Ridge, Singapore and wrote an article in the *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* titled "The Communist Insurgency in Malaysia, 1948-90: Contesting the Nation-State and Social Change."²⁴ The article focuses on the Malaya Emergency's impact of the various ethnic groups and the fight for their independence. Kheng (2009) explains the enduring impacts the Malaya Emergency had on society, human rights, and economic development.²⁵ Kheng (2009) does an excellent service to the reader to explain that the policies implemented by the British military continued beyond the end of the emergency until 1990.²⁶ Furthermore,

Malaya requested and chose to depend on foreign assistance for internal security. Despite the Malayan government's dependence on foreign security forces, the Malayan government focused on national development. The question is could Afghanistan follow Malaya's historical example?

The Philippine War (1899-1902) and the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) are the selected case study examples to use for historical comparisons to VSO because those counterinsurgencies employed doctrinal best practices during COIN operations.²⁷ An assumption of this thesis is that both counterinsurgencies were successful, but it is important to conduct unbiased research to ensure that research is thorough, accurate, and fair. Andrew Mumford (2011) writes the British COIN operations during the Malaya emergency should not be regarded as a successful counterinsurgency.²⁸ Mumford (2011) states that the British failed to achieve any success especially in the first two years of operations.²⁹ Mumford (2011) further elaborates that although the British are held in high regard for their COIN success, in Malaya the British resorted to harsh policies, excessive force, and violations of human and civil liberties to achieve success versus the application of COIN doctrinal fundamentals. The article is a valuable source as it does question the rationale behind why scholars, statesmen, and militaries have considered the British experience in Malaya as the pinnacle example of successful COIN operations.

As the author of this thesis and as an Army officer who conducted VSO in Afghanistan in 2011-2012, it is important to understand how American strategy and policy towards Afghanistan has evolved since the Soviet Union occupation. In the book *Afghanistan: How the West Lost Its Way*, by Tim Bird (2011) and Alex Marshal (2011), the authors provide a historical perspective of Afghanistan followed by a chronological

synopsis of how the coalition went awry. Bird (2011) and Marshall (2011) begin to explain Afghanistan's history to the reader and how it relates to the country today.³⁰ Bird (2011) and Marshall (2011) then go through a chronology from the attacks on 11 September 2001, to involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Afghanistan, to the failings and neglect of the war during 2002-2008 as Iraq took priority in the Global War on Terror.³¹ Bird (2011) and Marshall (2011) also elaborate how Pakistan complicates the situation in Afghanistan, and conclude with recommendations for Afghanistan and what should be the exit strategy for the coalition forces. Bird (2011) and Marshall (2011) explain how strategic failures have resulted in the rationale of VSO as a feasible strategy to defeat the Taliban and subsequently transition security responsibilities to the Afghans.³²

Considering the importance of the OEF-A and the emphasis USSOF has placed on VSO, the program's success is a focal point for CJSOTF-A and the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF). On 09 July 2012, the United States Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General (IG) published a report that is essentially the "report card" for the United States and coalition members planning and implementation of the ALP program as a component of VSO.³³ The report provides observations for the planning and execution in developing the ALP program.³⁴ The report acknowledges the successes of the ALP program through the publication date.³⁵ The observations in the report are formatted in the following parts: observation, discussion, recommendation, management comments, and IG comments.

¹Lamer Wiebke and Kathleen Hughes, *Village Defence: Understanding the Afghan Local Police (ALP)*, *Afghanistan Monthly Report* (Civil Military Fusion Centre, July 2011), 6.

²Rory Hanlin, "One Team's Approach to Village Stability Operations," *Small Wars Journal*, 4 September 2011, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/node/11412> (accessed 29 March 2013), 1.

³Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), xi.

⁴Robert D. Ramsey, III, *Savage Wars of Peace: Case Studies of Pacification in the Philippines, 1900-1902*, The Long War Series, Occasional Paper 24 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), 113.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Ibid.*, 121.

⁷Matthew Denny, "Preventing Conflict: Interagency Village Stability Operations Model" (Inter Agency Essay, The Simon Center, June 2012), <http://thesimonscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/IAE-12-02W-JUN2012.pdf> (accessed 28 March 2013), 8.

⁸Robert Hulslander and Jake Spivey, "Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police," *PRISM* 3, no. 3 (June 2012), <http://www.ndu/press/village-stability-operations.html> (accessed 29 March 2013).

⁹*Ibid.*, 125-148.

¹⁰Seth A. Shreckengast, "The Only Game in Town: Assessing the Effectiveness of Village Stability Operations and the Afghan Local Police," *Small Wars Journal*, 27 March 2012, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-only-game-in-town-assessing-the-effectiveness-of-village-stability-operations-and-the-a> (accessed 28 March 2013).

¹¹*Ibid.*, 1.

¹²Dr. Seth G. Jones, "Community Defense in Afghanistan," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 57 (2d Quarter 2010): 1.

¹³*Ibid.*, 11-12.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 12-15.

¹⁵Rebecca Barber, "No Time to Lose: Promoting the Accountability of the Afghan National Security Forces" (Joint Briefing Paper: Oxfam International, 10 May 2011).

¹⁶Ibid., 2.

¹⁷Ibid., 8.

¹⁸Ibid., 11-17.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., 26-31.

²¹Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, December 2006).

²²Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, April 2009).

²³Timothy R. Mungie, "Indigenous Police Forces in Counterinsurgency" (Monograph, School for Advanced Military Studies, Ft Leavenworth, KS, 27 May 2010).

²⁴Cheah Boon Kheng, "The Communist Insurgency in Malaysia, 1948-90: Contesting the Nation-State and Social Change," *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* (June 2009).

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid., 132.

²⁷Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-29.

²⁸Andrew Mumford, "Puncturing the Counterinsurgency Myth: Britain and Irregular Warfare in the Past, Present, and Future" (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, September 2011).

²⁹Ibid., 3.

³⁰Tim Bird and Alex Marshal, *Afghanistan: How the West Lost Its Way* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³United States Department of Defense, Inspector General, *Special Plans and Operations: Assessment of U.S. Government and Coalition Efforts to Develop the Afghan Local Police*, Report No. DODIG-2012-109 (Alexandria, VA: Department of Defense, 9 July 2012), i.

³⁴Ibid., 9-70.

³⁵Ibid., ii.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research necessary to determine the effectiveness of VSO will require a qualitative research methodology considering the available information. The topic of VSO is relatively new, but the concept of VSO, which is COIN, is as old as warfare itself. Due to the lack of specific written doctrine for VSO, and because the available metrics to determine the effectiveness of VSO are classified, a historical comparison is necessary to truly determine if VSO is a successful strategy. The most appropriate examples in history to draw comparisons to VSO is the Malaya Emergency (1948-1960) and the Philippines War (1899-1902). Both COIN campaigns are considered by many statesmen, soldiers, and scholars as successful counterinsurgencies.

The historical comparisons will include focused evaluations in the areas, or lines of operation, of security, governance, and development. These three focus areas are the basis for VSO and can easily be compared and contrasted with the Malaya Emergency and the Philippines War. The comparison and contrast will also use the geography of the three distinct examples. This comparison will identify the similarities and differences of geography and determine the impact on military operations. The various government systems, military forces, demographics, and significant cultural characteristics between the historical examples will also be identified through the historical comparison to determine the impact to military operations. A complete and thorough comparison of the three COIN operations will better enable the understanding of the similarities and differences among the counterinsurgencies. The comparison will also determine what metrics will be the most precise in judging the effectiveness of VSO.

The research will focus by beginning with the informal predecessors of “village stability operations” conducted prior to President Hamid Karzai’s approval of the ALP program in July of 2010 to present. Information about the Afghan security forces will place the ALP program into historical perspective.

While interviews on this topic would yield very interesting information about VSO, and relevant perspectives, oral histories and pre-recorded interviews are already available. Obviously there is value in interviews, but this thesis is a comparison based on historical examples. Therefore, there is limited value in conducting interviews. The interviews would provide additional perspectives from American military personnel who conducted VSO, but would not significantly enhance this thesis.

Once all research is collected and data is analyzed, the Malaya and Philippine historical examples will be compared and contrasted against the VSO lines of effort, VSO tenets, and VSO methodology to answer the thesis question. Other variables from the research, historical analysis, and comparison will be considered and evaluated in order to enable answering the thesis question.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Purpose and Organization

The purpose of chapter 4 is to present the findings of the research conducted for this thesis. Chapter 4 will provide the reader with additional background and history of the Philippine War, the Malaya Emergency, and Village Stability Operations in Afghanistan. The chapter will compare and contrast VSO to the Philippine War and the Malaya Emergency within the areas of governance, development, and security. The comparisons will also review the best COIN practices of the participating militaries and governments. The comparisons will analyze at the demographics of the population, and the causes of the insurgencies. An analysis of the protagonists, to include the counterinsurgent forces, host nation governments and civilian populations, will also be presented to understand the different key players involved. Chapter 4 will focus on the counterinsurgent actions to demonstrate the differences and similarities between the represented insurgent forces in the three studies.

Chapter 4 is organized into the following parts: (1) the purpose of the research, (2) background information for the Philippine War, Malayan Emergency, and VSO in Afghanistan, to include: demographics, geography, relevant history and the cause of the insurgencies, (3) application of COIN within the areas of security, governance, and development, (4) why the counterinsurgency is considered successful, (5) comparison of the counterinsurgencies along the areas of security, governance, and development, (6) chapter summary and conclusions.

The Philippine War, 1899-1902

The Philippines consists of 3,141 islands forming an archipelago nation.¹ The country is located in the Pacific Ocean, south of China and north of Indonesia. The country is just larger than the state of Arizona with a total area of 300,000 square kilometers.² The terrain is very mountainous with narrow to extensive lowlands lying along the coast and valleys and plains located in the interior.³ The two largest islands of Mindanao and Luzon comprise 75 percent of the total land area.

The demographics of the archipelago were very diverse and divided along various ethnicities, languages, and religious groups. At the turn of the 20th century, the Philippines consisted of the following major ethnic groups: Negritos, Indonesians, Malayans, European mestizos, and Chinese.⁴ The largest ethnic group was the Malayans who were dispersed throughout the archipelago and consisted of 47 tribes.⁵ The Malayans were classified into further sub-groups to include the Visayans, Tagalogs, Bicol, Ilocanos, Pangasinans, Pampangos, Moros, and Cagayanes. The Negritos were the initial inhabitants of the archipelago who migrated from New Guinea. The Negritos lived in the mountainous regions throughout most islands and consisted of over 20 sub-tribes.⁶ The Indonesians lived mostly on Mindanao and consisted of 16 sub-tribes.⁷ European mestizos were predominantly the descendants of the Spanish and were among the most influential in the Filipino society. An influential Chinese community of approximately 38,000 immigrants lived within the islands as well.⁸

The social structure in the Philippines consisted of two classes; a small ruling elite and the impoverished, uneducated poor masses. Within the ruling elite were the Spaniards, known as the *peninsulares*, and the descendants born in the Philippines known

as the *insulares*.⁹ At the lowest socio-economic level were the non-Spanish native born Filipinos called *indios*.¹⁰ The Chinese population, also considered part of the elite class, provided economic services in banking, commerce, craftsman, and artisans.¹¹

There was no official language for the inhabitants of the Philippines and less than ten percent of the population could speak Spanish.¹² As of 1898, 27 different dialects had been identified with the major languages being Tagalog, Bicol, Ilocano, Ibang, Pangasinan, Pampanga, and Bisaya.¹³ Languages within the archipelago were confined to local areas due to the restrictive mountainous terrain and the structure of the archipelago. Communication was significantly hindered between the various populations and the government because of the ethnic diversity and geography.

Religious diversity was predominant in the Philippines with various religious groups prevalent in the country to include Christian, Catholic, non-Christian pagans, and Muslims in the southern part of the island. Within each religion, groups and denominations commonly practiced different habits and customs.¹⁴

Catholic priests and friars were an integral part of the Spanish colonial government system. The friars performed several functions typically reserved for local government to include: maintaining census and tax records, supervising selection of local government officials and police, reporting the character and behavior of the natives, reporting acts of sedition, implementing public health measures, and responsible for public education.¹⁵

Catholic priests typically possessed significant political clout as they represented the church and the colonial government. Priests' influence over the population provided them unique powers that could assist or counter the efforts of government leaders and

officials. The roles of the priests and friars would continue to influence events during the Philippines War. Some clergymen would be responsible for providing information and intelligence to the guerillas, as well as supporting the guerillas in an effort to preserve power and prestige as their power waned.

The Road to Insurrection

The social and political environment began to transform in the Philippines in the latter 1800s. Filipinos from the elite class began to attend universities in the Philippines and abroad. This group of elites, called *ilustrados*, became educated and embraced liberalism, reform, and greater involvement of Filipinos in the Spanish controlled colonial government.¹⁶ In 1872, a failed revolt resulted in several *ilustrados* being exiled to Guam or the Marianas Islands, and three Filipino priests supporting liberal reform were executed by the Spanish government.¹⁷ The Filipino movement, called the Propaganda Movement, continued to gain momentum with the goals of attaining freedom of speech and association, racial equality, equal opportunity for Filipinos to hold government positions, secularization of the clergy, separate public school system from the clergy, and Philippine representation in the Spanish Parliament.¹⁸

In July of 1892, Jose Rizal, a leader in the Propaganda Movement, created the Philippine League, a national, non-violent, reform association.¹⁹ As a result, the Spanish government arrested and exiled Rizal to the island of Mindanao. The *ilustrados'* national movement which advocated reform through peaceful protest, was contradicted by other Filipinos who supported the use of force against the Spanish colonial rulers.²⁰ This division resulted in a self-educated man named Andres Bonifacio to form the *Katipunan* ("Highest and Most Honorable Society of the Sons of the Country") on 7 July 1892.²¹

The *Katipunan* appealed to the poor and uneducated masses with the single goal of gaining independence from the Spanish government.²² Bonafacio initiated the failed Revolt of 1896 by attacking Spanish military garrisons in Manila, only to be defeated.²³ In response, the Spanish government arrested and executed Jose Rizal for the revolt although Rizal had no connections to the *Katipunan*. Despite the failure of the revolt, the Rival's execution created a martyr for the *insurrectos*.²⁴ Bonafacio's lack of military leadership and skill caused him to lose influence within the *Katipunan* for the failed revolt.²⁵ Consequently, another member of the *Katipunan*, Emilio Aguinaldo, managed to defeat some local Spanish forces, earning him notoriety and supporters.²⁶ Aguinaldo's rise within the *Katipunan* caused a split in support for Bonafacio and Aguinaldo.²⁷ Aguinaldo would ultimately be elected as the *Katipunan* president as Bonafacio took his few supporters to form a separate movement.²⁸ Aguinaldo's and Bonafacio's separate movements would fight internally for control of the *Katipunan*.²⁹ Aguinaldo would eventually arrest and execute Bonafacio on 10 May 1897 to consolidate his power and seize control of the *Katipunan*.³⁰ Due to the success of the Spanish government use of local Filipino police forces to defeat the *insurrectos* from conducting conventional operations, Aguinaldo would adopt guerilla warfare and retreat to the safety of the mountains of Bulacan province.³¹

In June of 1897, Aguinaldo issued a proclamation outlying the political goals of the *Katipunan*: expulsion of the friars and division of their property dispersed among the secular clergymen; original landowners returned land seized by the friars; increased economic and political autonomy, freedom of the press; religious tolerance; and equal treatment of the Filipinos.³² In August of 1897, Aguinaldo's quest for independence

resulted with the new Spanish governor seeking to conduct armistice negotiations with the *insurrectos*.³³ On 14 December 1897, the Pact of Biyak-na-Bato ended the Filipino uprising against the colonial Spanish rulers.³⁴ Aguinaldo, along with many of his supporters were exiled to Hong Kong and the Spanish governor-general granted amnesty to the *insurrectos*.³⁵ Aguinaldo would receive 400,000 Mexican pesos as part of payment from the Spanish.³⁶ Aguinaldo deposited this money into a bank upon his arrival in Hong Kong while waiting for an opportunity to resume the revolution in the Philippines against the Spanish government.³⁷ The Spanish governor-general implemented only a few reforms, but declared general amnesty on 25 January 1898.³⁸ The Spanish also paid 200,000 pesos to the *insurrectos* who were not forced into exile and were assimilated back into Filipino society.³⁹ Aguinaldo and his *insurrectos* would wait for the time when they could resume their revolution against the Spanish, but no one knew how fortuitous fate would be later in 1898 for the revolution.⁴⁰

The Philippine War: The Cause of the Insurgency

In April 1898, Spain declared war on the United States of America as a result of United States intervention in the Cuban War of Independence.⁴¹ Although Spain attempted to reach a compromise with the United States, the sinking of the USS Maine in Havana harbor coupled with increasing political pressure on President William Taft resulted in no peace between the nations. The United States would sink the Spanish naval fleet at Manila Bay on 1 May 1898.⁴² Under the provisions of the Treaty of Paris, Spain would cede their colony in the Philippines to the United States. The conditions were now set for the return of Emilio Aguinaldo and for what Aguinaldo thought would be the opportunity for him to secure Filipino independence from the Spanish.

Emilio Aguinaldo returned from exile in Hong Kong to the Philippines on 19 May 1898.⁴³ Spanish forces remained in Manila after the Spanish fleet was sunk. Commodore George Dewey, Commander of the American Asiatic Squadron met with Aguinaldo to develop a strategy for Filipino revolutionary forces to attack the Spanish garrison in Manila. Dewey recognized that the American forces lacked sufficient infantry and Marines to defeat the Spanish in Manila. Aguinaldo and the Filipino revolutionaries were successful in defeating the remnants of the Spanish forces in the Manila, but in a turn of events that the Americans did not anticipate the Philippine War would erupt. On 24 May 1898, Emilio Aguinaldo declared himself dictator of the Philippines until political power could be transferred to an elected president and government.⁴⁴ Aguinaldo created the Philippine Republic through this declaration. Dewey empowered and supported Aguinaldo and the Filipino *insurrectos* to defeat the Spanish, but the unintended consequence is that Emilio Aguinaldo assumed the Americans were there to liberate the Filipinos from Spanish colonial rule, not resume colonialism under American rule.⁴⁵ Aguinaldo thought the days of colonial rule were over, but American foreign policy and economic interests would replace one colonial power for another. And so, the roots of the Philippine War would continue to grow.

Following the defeat of the Spanish at Manila by the *insurrectos*, Aguinaldo began to further consolidate his power, increase the size of his conventional army, and continue the defeat of the Spanish forces throughout the Philippine archipelago with U.S. assistance.⁴⁶ As fate would have it, the Spanish inadvertently assisted the revolutionary *insurrectos* by training and equipping a militia consisting of former *Katipunan* members.⁴⁷ This militia would defect to Aguinaldo's forces and form the nucleus of the

revolutionary army. By June 1898, Aguinaldo successfully created both a conventional force, called the Army of Liberation, and revolutionary militia.⁴⁸ The Army of Liberation lacked the discipline, training, and equipment of the superior American Army.

The war for the Philippines lacked the desired support from the American public, but in April 1898, the United States Congress authorized a volunteer army of 125,000 soldiers and a Regular Army force of 65,000 soldiers.⁴⁹ The overall strategy for the United States regarding the Philippines remained unclear as Major General Wesley Merritt, Commander of the Philippine Expedition, wrote President McKinley to seek clarification on the objective of his mission. Once the Treaty of Paris was signed on 10 December 1898, the Philippines was ceded to the United States at a cost of \$20 million.⁵⁰ President McKinley responded to the United States Army that “the actual occupation and administration of the entire group of the Philippine Islands becomes immediately necessary” and the task for the United States Army was to “win the confidence, respect, and affection of the inhabitants of the Philippines.”⁵¹

The Philippine War would begin on 4 February 1899 with 21,000 American troops fighting the Filipino Army of Liberation in Manila. From February until October 1899, the war would be fought as a conventional war.⁵² The Army of Liberation proved to be no match for the better trained and equipped American Army. The Army of Liberation would be defeated and a guerilla war would ensue for the next three years.

Security, Governance, and Development

Security is first and foremost for any military operation. As the American forces continued to increase force strength, the Americans recruited local national Filipinos to augment American military strength. In September 1899, the Americans began recruiting

Filipinos to support American units to assist with information and intelligence collection.⁵³ Members of the Macabebe tribe were utilized to serve as guides, scouts, and security along American supply lines. Within a few months, indigenous forces comprised of Tagalogs, Panpangans, and other tribes would augment the American forces by providing an indigenous security force with approximately 29,000 troops.⁵⁴

In January 1899, Major General Elwell Otis, the Deputy Commander of the Philippine Expedition, issued General Orders 40 with instructions for organizing local governments.⁵⁵ The Philippines were divided into four departments with an American general officer serving as a military governor. Each department was divided into districts, commanded by a brigadier general or colonel, and within each province in the district a regiment occupied the area. The Americans thought the war was over so the focus for the American forces was establishing and developing the local government, improve the education system, conduct public works, and increase the medical capacity of the Philippines. The focus on development was to build support among the Filipino population for the Americans while addressing some of the basic services that became lacking due to the defeat of the Spanish.

General Otis followed General Order 40 with several other proclamations to include General Order 43 which gave the responsibility of governing the Philippines to the social elite.⁵⁶ General Order 58 amended the previous Spanish legal code by establishing a new judicial system.⁵⁷ General Otis efforts in improving governance was viewed by many Filipinos as fair and transparent. The Army attempted to establish local and municipal governments with native officials. Government systems were based upon Spanish systems to maintain continuity while providing basic governmental services to

the people. The American efforts attempted to demonstrate the commitment to political autonomy for the Filipinos at the local level.⁵⁸ Yet, the fact remained that many other Filipinos supporting the insurrection viewed the Americans as another colonial power.

The American policy towards the Filipinos was that of pacification and leniency. General Otis emphasized the importance to “win the confidence, respect, and admiration of the inhabitants of the Philippines.”⁵⁹ General Otis’ approach to deal with the Filipinos was “simply to keep scrupulous faith with these people and teach them to trust us.”⁶⁰ General Otis imposed strict discipline within the ranks and ordered his men to respect the people and their customs, forbid looting, and destruction of private property. Any violations by Americans resulted in harsh punishment. Every attempt was made to counter insurgent propaganda and build trust among the Filipino people.

The Americans effort along the lines of development included opening schools that were staffed by soldier volunteers, the construction of roads, the refurbishment of markets and other public facilities, and conducted civil sanitation projects to sanitize towns.⁶¹

In April 1899, General Otis reported to the Department of War that “we no longer deal with organized insurrection, but brigandage; to render every town secure . . . would require a quarter million men”⁶² By this time, the conventional war between the Filipinos and American forces was over and the Americans deduced that pacification and transition to civil government was well under way. In order to facilitate the transition to civil authority, the Secretary of War appointed the Taft Commission to assist with governance and development in the Philippines.

By the end of 1899, Emilio Aguinaldo shifted his strategy to focus on conducting guerilla warfare against the Americans.⁶³ The *insurrectos* used guerilla tactics against the Spanish while assisting the American two years earlier, so they easily reverted to proven tactics.⁶⁴ Aguinaldo disbanded what remained of his conventional Army of Liberation and decentralized operations for the *insurrectos*.⁶⁵ Aguinaldo reorganized the structure of his forces within the existing local organizational structure that was created with local leaders. Aguinaldo's strategy for the guerillas was to wear down the American forces while the anti-war sentiment in the United States forced an early redeployment of American forces. As Aguinaldo employed guerilla warfare against the Americans, the Americans perceived the change in the situation as lawlessness, not necessarily a change in tactics or strategy. The experience of the Americans in dealing with guerilla warfare was gained mostly from the Native Americans in the United States. However, the difference in the Filipinos versus the Native Americans is that the Filipinos could not be forced onto a reservation and given a degree of autonomy like the Native Americans.

The Americans policies of pacification and leniency towards the guerillas were failing to quell the guerilla attacks. An amnesty program offered guerillas 30 pesos for a rifle turned in to the Americans with no further ramifications.⁶⁶ Local military commissions routinely reduced sentences for guerillas suspected of committing crimes. The pacification process not only proved to be ineffective in pacifying the resistance, but was a significant burden on to small-unit commanders. The small-unit commanders lacked the staff, resources, manning, and desire to effectively oversee the local governments and oversee development activities in addition to conducting routine administrative and operational duties.⁶⁷ Additionally, several small-unit leaders did not

have the knowledge, experience, or much less the desire to conduct civil affairs activities.

The key to success was explained by Captain John R. M. Taylor, who authored the official history of the Philippine War, when he wrote:

it was the local commander's force of character that won or lost the day. Where he spoke with authority and governed like a benevolent patron, he acted in ways which the people could understand and respect. Only when they were convinced the American officer had the character, the will, and the means to protect them did they begin to submit themselves to American authority.⁶⁸

Other problems plagued the American forces to include language and cultural barriers, rampant racism against the Filipinos, and increased instances of misconduct that stressed the relations between the Americans and Filipinos.

The American pacification policy was failing to convince the majority of Filipinos to support the Americans. The average Filipino perceived the guerillas more than capable of conducting assassinations as well as intimidating the populace to prevent Filipinos from providing the Americans with intelligence. The Filipinos viewed the Americans as being weak even though the American Army was determined to provide for and protect the civilian population. Regardless, the guerillas remained more than capable of instilling fear into the civilian population. Further complicating matters was the fact that the American and Filipino government judicial system was too lenient on the *insurrectos*, who would often receive reduced sentences.⁶⁹ The policy of pacification further failed due to the lack of the American understanding of the depth of the rebellion. The Americans also miscalculated the appeal of the resistance movement.⁷⁰ The tremendous efforts put forth by the Americans to build schools, infrastructure, and provide basic services to the Filipinos would not deter the Filipinos from the traditional

socioeconomic class system. Many of the Filipinos would remain subservient to the elite classes within the guerillas despite the American attempts at pacification.

American civil government also contributed to the American pacification efforts under the auspices of the Taft Commission.⁷¹ Congress passed several pieces of legislation that were designed to improve the economic and social conditions of the Filipinos.⁷² The civilian commissioners of the Taft Commission established civil courts, revamped municipal governments, created new provincial governments, and promoted the development of the Federal Party.⁷³ The Federal Party was a political party comprised of Filipinos supportive of American rule whose mission was to start a counterrevolution against the *insurrectos*.⁷⁴ Despite the successes of the American civil government, the American Army had considerable consternation and resentment regarding the American civilian government as they viewed it contrary to maintaining unity of command.

By the end of 1899 the American strategy of pacification and lenient policies in dealing with the *insurrectos* was failing to quell the violence.⁷⁵ American Army strategy would become more draconian, with stricter policies, more severe punishments for the revolutionaries, and harsher treatment for the Filipinos. A new phase of the Philippine War was about to begin in November 1899 continuing through the end of the war in 1902.⁷⁶

Once the *insurrectos* adopted guerrilla warfare to battle the Americans, pacification policies took an abrupt turn for stricter measures. General Order 100 was initiated which approved the use of monetary fines, communal punishments, destruction of public property, exile of individuals, relocation of civilian populations, imprisonment, and execution.⁷⁷ These measures were used to address the insurgency, but not all officers

applied the measures. Some officers continued to use more lenient measures of pacification, but as the war continued and the insurgency remained capable, an increasing number of officers discovered that harsher and more severe actions were necessary to defeat the insurgency.

The application of the stricter measures varied throughout the archipelago, as American military forces determined to what extent each individual town and village would be dealt with. Town and villages that supported the Filipino government and the Americans continued to benefit from the benevolent pacification measures. However, those areas and populations that supported or participated in guerilla activity were dealt with harshly. American forces often burned private homes and crops, exiled entire communities, confiscated private property, and implemented curfews with the condition that any violators would be shot. The degree of destruction and devastation to the population was directly related to the amount of resistance and support to the guerillas. Some areas were completely destroyed if a town or village was determined to be under guerilla control, while other areas supportive of the Americans and the Filipino government benefitted from effective governance and development.

The new American strategy was determined to destroy the guerillas by destroying any refuge available and deter any collaborators against supporting and assisting the guerillas. One unintended consequence of the American strategy was that of the internally displaced persons within the country. Much of the countryside was destroyed by the American army due to the insurgent support network in the mountainous areas outside of larger towns and cities. The internally displaced persons were placed into camps and isolated from the guerillas. The American forces were very cautious in

treating the civilians humanely so not to have a public relations disaster and to build rapport with Filipinos in order to influence support for the Filipino government.

As the war continued throughout late 1900 and early 1901, the American strategy proved to be increasingly effective.⁷⁸ Guerilla commanders at all levels began to surrender on a more regular basis with only two guerilla commanders remaining in hiding by mid-1901.⁷⁹ The policies imposed by the American military, combined with the increasing capacity of the Filipino government, began to dismantle the guerillas and their support networks. In early 1902 the last two guerilla commanders were detained and the majority of guerillas capitulated within a few months.⁸⁰ On 4 July 1902, the United States officially declared the end to the Philippine War.⁸¹

Why was the Philippines War a Successful Counterinsurgency?

The Philippine War was a relatively successful COIN for the American military for several key reasons. While insurgencies and counterinsurgencies are not new concepts in warfare, the Philippines proved especially unique for the Americans. The Philippine insurrection against the Spanish was not a surprise, however the circumstances that found Emilio Aguinaldo fighting the Americans is quite interesting. The Americans misunderstood the Filipino resentment of the Spanish. The Filipinos were the least interested in immediately replacing one colonial power for another colonial power upon the American defeat of the Spanish navy fleet in Manila Bay. The Filipinos initially perceived the Americans as liberators, not as occupiers of their country. As a result of the Filipino experience with the Spanish, the conditions for an insurgency in the Philippines had been in the making long before the arrival of the first American forces in 1898.⁸²

The Americans were by no means inexperienced with conducting COIN. Many of the Americans serving in the Philippines had some experience in pacifying and resettling the Native Americans in the American west. Other Americans recently served in Cuba where COIN operations were routine. The American experiences enabled veterans of Cuba particularly to understand the insurgency and to conduct COIN.

Another factor that contributed to the success of the American forces was that the Filipino *insurrectos* did not benefit from any foreign external support outside the Philippines.⁸³ As the war progressed, the American army discovered that seizing guerilla weapons was equally important as capturing guerilla fighters. The error committed by the Americans during the first phase of the war was that most guerillas were released from prison unless they were a senior guerilla leader. The captured weapons and materials could not be replaced. There was no industrial base to build weapons to replace those weapons captured or destroyed. Insurgencies with external support are significantly more likely to succeed than those insurgencies without external support.

The American forces were far better trained than the Army of Liberation. The Army of Liberation lacked the discipline, training, and equipment that the far superior American army possessed. The defeat of the Army of Liberation was an operational success for the Americans, but that defeat forced Aguinaldo to shift his strategy to adopting guerilla warfare to fight the Americans.

The Americans initially misunderstood that the war was transitioning from conventional to a guerilla war, but changed and adapted the American strategy to defeat the insurgency. The Pacification proved to be failing at about the same time that Aguinaldo changed his strategy from fighting a conventional fight to a guerilla war. The

American change in strategy transitioned from policies that were lenient to policies designed to finally defeat the insurgents and support networks. The policy of persuading the population to support the Filipino government failed as the guerilla fighters continued to battle the Americans. The initial policies failed to separate the population from the insurgents, but once the guerillas remained in jail and the population understood that there are serious repercussions in supporting the guerillas, then the momentum in the war shifted in favor of the Americans. The ability of the Americans to change strategy when necessary was critical in ending the war earlier versus later.

The Americans used indigenous populations to their advantage to gain an advantage against the guerillas. First, the Americans recruited Filipinos to serve within their ranks as scouts and for additional security. The Filipinos were invaluable at providing the Americans with vital information and intelligence about the *insurrectos* and guerilla supporters.⁸⁴ The Americans also recruited local Filipinos and established local police forces to protect villages from insurgents. General Orders 43 was essential in ensuring that towns were organized with a *presidente*, a town council, but most importantly for security, the establishment of a local police force.⁸⁵ The use of local police forces facilitated the collection of intelligence, fostered a sense of responsibility and ownership for the Filipinos, assisted the Americans in defeating the insurgents, and demonstrated that the Filipino government was capable of providing basic services for the people.

The American forces also emplaced Filipinos in local level government positions to establish a Filipino led and administered government. The Filipino local governments relieved some of the responsibility of governance from local American officers. The local

government officials created the perception that the Americans were not the same as the colonial Spanish that the Filipinos detested. The system demonstrated that despite the Philippines being under the control of an American military governor, Filipino representation existed throughout government at all levels. This was contradictory to Spanish rule, in which there was limited involvement and participation by Filipinos in important local government positions. One of the causes for the Propaganda Movement was for the Spanish government to allow more Filipinos to be represented in the Spanish government. Despite the economic and political interests the United States had in occupying the Philippines, the fact that Filipinos comprised the local governments provided some reassurance that the Americans differed from the colonial Spaniards. This allowed the Americans to build continued support among the Filipinos and more easily persuade the population to support the larger Filipino government and appreciate the advantages of the American presence in the Philippines.

Ultimately, the change in American strategy to use a more aggressive approach in defeating the insurgency proved very effective in the Philippines. If the Americans had not modified the strategy, perhaps the Philippine War would have lasted much longer than three years. The Americans were also fortunate in that the *insurrectos* were an inferior conventional force, and the guerilla fighters lacked the external support many contemporary insurgencies have benefitted from. However, the Americans could have easily ruined their chances in defeating the insurgency, especially in the transition to stricter measures. Many of the American officers and soldiers were frustrated with the progress of the war. As a result, many officers vented their frustration upon the locals and their property. One interesting facet of the use of indigenous police forces was that local

police frequently used torture, particularly, water boarding during interrogations. These interrogations were often instrumental in gaining intelligence, but sometimes inadvertent deaths of innocent persons occurred. Furthermore, the change in American tactics were viewed by some as too aggressive, but in order to defeat the insurgency and defeat the will of the population to support the guerillas, the tactics were obviously effective. The more aggressive tactics might have proven disastrous for the Americans, but the fact is that the insurrectos were guilty of using much more aggressive and heinous methods to deal with American and Filipino government sympathizers. The Filipinos appreciated and welcomed the American renewed approach to stopping the insurgency with stronger force.

The success of the American COIN strategy in the Philippine War was determined by fate, circumstance, trial and error, and experience. If one of the factors involved in the Philippine War were different, then the resulting outcome may have been significantly different. The Americans basically understood the principles of an insurgency and how to defeat an insurgency and successfully applied those principles.

The Malayan Emergency, 1947-1960

Malaysia is located in Southeast Asia, and is a geographically fragmented country consisting of two parts. Mainland Malaysia, also referred to as West Malaysia, is located on the southern end of the Malayan Peninsula surrounded by the South China Sea and bordered by Thailand to the north. East Malaysia consists of an island that is shared with bordering Borneo. East Malaysia is situated on the north-northwestern side of Borneo approximately 500 miles east of East Malaysia.⁸⁶ East Malaysia consists of 60 percent of the land mass, but only contains about 20 percent of the population.⁸⁷ The total land area

of Malaysia is 328,647 square kilometers and is approximately larger than the state of New Mexico in the United States.⁸⁸ The terrain in Malaysia consists of coastal plains with increases in elevation due to hills and mountains. The climate is typically tropical from spring until autumn, and then transitions to monsoon season in the winter months.

The demographics of Malaysia prior to and during the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) can be described as very diverse. The largest ethnic group was the indigenous Muslim Malays. The Muslim Malays accepted British rule, although their loyalties remained with the Sultans who possessed limited power in government of the states. The Muslim Malays' population was approximately five million in 1948.⁸⁹ Another ethnic group was the indigenous Aborigines who lived a very rural lives deep within the jungles of the Malayan peninsula. The Aborigines were an isolated ethnic group who refused to acknowledge the limited power of the sultans. The Indians consisted of approximately half a million in 1948 and emigrated from the Madras area of India.⁹⁰ The Indians were the dominant labor force within Malaysia who sought higher wages than in India working in rubber plantations.

The Chinese population came to Malaysia during the colonial period and later as the Japanese occupied China during World War II. During World War II, the Japanese ruled Malaysia and persecuted the Chinese population forcing many to seek refuge in the mountainous jungles in the interior of the country. Consequently, this action resulted in the Chinese founding a Communist resistance movement that destabilized the Malayan peninsula. The Chinese population in Malaysia was about two million in 1948.⁹¹

Malaysia had been a British colony since 1874.⁹² As a result, the British were also a significant ethnic group in Malaysia with a population of about 12,000, most of which

were government administrators, rubber plantation owners, physicians and businessmen.⁹³ Other ethnic minorities also existed in Malaysia to include various Asians, European, and Middle Eastern ethnic groups.

Language diversity is common and is representative of the ethnic diversity within Malaysia. While Bahasa Malaysian is currently the official language, English was traditionally the language of government and commerce. Malaysian gradually evolved to become the official language. Other languages to include various dialects of Chinese, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Panjabi, and Thai were spoken throughout the country. In East Malaysia, several indigenous languages were commonly spoken.

The predominant religion in Malaysia is Islam with over half of the population being Muslim. Islam was introduced to the Malayan peninsula around the 14th century.⁹⁴ The country also has significant religious diversity to include Buddhism, Christianity, Hindu, Confucianism, and other traditional Chinese religious imported by the Chinese migrants.

Prior to World War II, Malaysia was considerably stable and peaceful as a British-ruled colony. World War II was a pivotal time in the history of Malaya that altered the dynamics between the British rulers and the diverse Malaysian population. The Japanese occupation during World War II also significantly impacted not only the Chinese, but the entire population of Malaysia. The Japanese occupation devastated not only the economic well-being of the country, but destabilized the social stability that had existed between the various ethnic groups. In the aftermath of the Japanese occupation and World War II, Malaysia would be torn apart and never resemble the nation it once was prior to the war. The beginnings of an insurrection and insurgency would be born

from a British attempt to restore civil society and impose a renewed, yet very unpopular British rule in Malaysia.

The Birth of Insurgency in Malaysia

Upon the surrender of the Empire of Japan, the British regained control of Malaysia. The British faced several challenges in restoring the Malaysian government. First, many of the mines and rubber plantations were destroyed by the British and Malaysians in order to prevent the Japanese from exploiting the resources. Therefore, Malaya lost a significant economic sector and was slow to recover from the self-inflicted damage destruction of those economic resources. Second, the Japanese further perpetuated the ethnic divisions within Malaysia. During the Japanese occupation, the Malays were favored over the Chinese. While the Malays enjoyed the favoritism and benefits of the Japanese prejudicial policies, the Chinese were persecuted. Ethnic tensions between the Chinese and Malays continued after the Japanese departed Malaysia. The ethnic tensions continue to be part of Malaysia society today.

The British further complicated the situation in Malaysia upon their return by their own actions. The British planned for a new Malaysian constitution without any consultation from the Malayan leadership or consideration for the Malayan people. The new constitution would change the status of Malaysia from a British protectorate to a British Colony. This provision would give citizenship to anyone born in Malaya within the past ten years regardless of ethnic heritage.⁹⁵ The indigenous Malaysians were concerned that they would become a minority ethnic group within their own country and that there would be an increase in foreign migration to Malaysia.

The Malayan resentment of the proposed constitution caused the British to revise the constitution and develop a more comprehensive constitution congruent with the Malaysians desires. The unintended consequences of the constitutional fiasco and British actions post-World War II gave rise to an insurrection. The British were perceived weak and less capable to govern Malaysia after World War II. Malayan nationalism was also growing while Communism was expanding throughout the world. The conditions in Malaysia were set for rebellion and the communist party was prepared to take full advantage of the opportunity.

On the morning of 16 June 1948 Malaya would experience the beginning of an insurgency and acts of terrorism that would devastate the country and collapse the Malayan economy. The first victim of the Communist Chinese was a British plantation owner named Arthur Walker, who was murdered by three ethnic Chinese on his estate in northern Malaya.⁹⁶ Walker would not be the only victim this day. Several other victims were murdered and abducted that day by the Communists. The Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) would continue to use terrorism to promote the goal of forcing the British from Malaysia and establishing a Communist government in the country.

For the next year the murders of plantation and mine owners would continue. The victims were not only British citizens, but also any other person and their families supportive of the British regardless of their ethnicity. Unfortunately, the government response to the Communist Party of Malaysia's (CPM) terrorism and destruction of land and infrastructure was delayed and initially insufficient. The government adopted a defensive strategy to protect the plantations and mines. Police, who were previously unarmed, finally received weapons and increased powers to include: power to detain

suspects for two years without a trial and the authorization to conduct searches without a warrant.⁹⁷ While maintaining the defensive posture, police recruitment was increased to provide a more substantial security force to protect the population from the terrorist attacks. The government instituted other measures designed to erode the insurgency. The British established a rewards system for the information leading to the capture or killing of Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) insurgents, and bounties were placed on key leaders, especially on Chin Peng, the ethnic Chinese leader of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM).⁹⁸ The British implemented a national registration program that made it mandatory for every person over the age of twelve years to possess an identification card with their photograph and fingerprints. The registration program served as both a national census and allowed the government to easily ascertain who was an insurgent versus a civilian non-combatant. These efforts proved too unsubstantial to defeat the Communist Party of Malaya's (CPM) guerilla tactics and attempts to collapse the Malayan economy. The British government was concerned the emergency in Malaya was becoming an increasing threat to British interests.

Fortunately, the British managed to make some gradual progress in against the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) by the end of 1949 with the implementation some additional COIN techniques and strategies.⁹⁹ One technique implemented was the resettlement of Chinese squatters to "New Villages."¹⁰⁰ The Chinese squatter populations proved to be problematic for the government because the populations were extremely vulnerable to Communist recruiting and support. The government also increased the amount of monetary rewards for informers. The police also used the Banishment Act to deport more than ten thousand Chinese who returned to deplorable conditions in

China.¹⁰¹ Despite these efforts and others, the British High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney, did not have the capability to manage the Malayan politics, govern the country, and synchronize the security forces simultaneously. The solution to this management dilemma was resolved when Lieutenant-General (Lt-Gen.) Sir Harold Briggs was appointed as the Director of Operations in Malaya in late 1949.¹⁰² Sir Harold Briggs, although retired from military service, hesitantly accepted the Director of Operations, but under the auspices of the “Briggs Plan” managed to effectively influence the war in the favor of the British.¹⁰³ Thus, the Briggs Plan revolutionized how the British conducted COIN and contributed to the historical legacy making the Malayan Emergency one of the most successful counterinsurgencies to date.¹⁰⁴

Security, Governance, and Development: The Briggs Plan

Sir Harold Briggs assessment of the situation in Malaya was that the people were the key to successfully defeating the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM). On his first day on the job, Briggs stated, “the whole key to the war lies in getting control of the squatter areas . . . the people matter—they are vital—but you can’t expect any support from the people you can’t protect.”¹⁰⁵ The premise of the Briggs Plan was to resettle most of the 600,000 Chinese squatters into New Villages where conditions were much improved from their current locations.¹⁰⁶ The plan would provide a better life for the Chinese squatters, but would deny the Communists access to the people for recruitment. The plan would also deny the Communists critical support and their sources of food and supplies.

In addition to developing the Briggs Plan, Sir Harold Briggs understood how to defeat the Communists and through the following recommendations on how to conduct the war:

To dominate the populated areas and to build up a feeling of complete security therein which will in time result in a steady and increasing flow of information coming from all sources.

To break up the Communist organization within the populated areas.

To isolate the bandits from their food and information supply organizations which are in the populated area.

To destroy the bandits by forcing them to attack us on our own ground.¹⁰⁷

As ingenious as the Briggs Plan was at the time, the plan depended upon the coordinated efforts of the Malayan government, police and the army. Briggs said, “The ministries, police, the army have all got to do their own jobs . . . We’re not going to do it for them. We’ll coordinate – we’ll pick up things that go wrong and supervise.”¹⁰⁸

The Briggs Plan was a simple plan that effectively applied COIN principles to influence the effective security, governance, and development of Malaya. The effectiveness of the Briggs Plan went beyond isolating the vulnerable civilian population from the insurgents, but actually improved the lives of the Chinese squatters with development initiatives. Perhaps one of the most effective aspects of the plan was that the Sultans agreed to give the Chinese squatters title-deeds for agricultural land. By doing this, the Sultans promoted equality among the people and provided an opportunity for the Chinese squatters to positively improve their lives.

The plan not only allocated land for domiciles and farming land, but each New Village was constructed to include a police station, school, medical clinic, electricity, water stand pipes, and areas reserved for the roads and shops.¹⁰⁹ Families received an area of 800 square yards, with an additional two acres for cultivation.¹¹⁰ The New

Villages were assigned administrators to manage the camps, schoolmaster to teach at the schools, and nurses to operate the clinics. Once construction on the homes was complete, the government was careful to protect the squatters by not revealing the time of their move or the exact locations. The British did this to prevent insurgents from infiltrating the New Villages and protect the squatters from intimidation.

The Communists tried to use the resettlement program for propaganda, and for the Chinese squatters moving from homes they had lived for years was difficult. Many squatters protested the plan and relocating, but most appreciated the benefits from owning land, the availability of medical care, and the opportunity for education. The British countered the propaganda by incentivizing each family with a government subsidy for six months until the farmers could reap their first harvest.¹¹¹ The camps also replaced barbed wire with chain link fence to counter the Communist propaganda that the New Villages were concentration camps.¹¹² The New Villages proved to very successful as 400,000 squatters were relocated by the middle of 1951.¹¹³ Briggs next action was to increase governance capacity within each New Village by giving more responsibility to the citizens. Briggs established New Village Councils where the residents voted for their leadership.¹¹⁴ Unfortunately, the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) reaction was a policy of intimidation and threats so intense that the elected leadership was either murdered or forced to seek refuge in neighboring countries.¹¹⁵ As a counter-response, Briggs implemented a measure of population and resource control by introducing new regulations to prevent food, medicine, and other supplies from supporting the insurgents in the jungles.¹¹⁶ The measure involved a list of restricted goods, and mandated any item on the list sold required a written record of the sale to include name and address of the

buyer. Briggs also limited the number of shops in an area, closed several restaurant and cafes, and prohibited the transport of restricted goods at night.¹¹⁷ This program was not an original Briggs' plan, but was presented by the Chinese squatters to counter the insurgent intimidation. This request demonstrated that the Briggs Plan was fundamentally successful in that insurgents were being adversely effected and that the government was gaining the support and confidence of the population. This new measure had a significant impact on the insurgency as it denied them critical supplies and food. The Briggs Plan was beginning to work.

The Briggs Plan began to negatively impact the insurgents as some insurgents began to surrender. Granted the surrenders were minimal, but enough insurgents had surrendered by 1951 that several internment camps had to be constructed and managed.¹¹⁸ The camps were designed to reintegrate the insurgents into society, to provide them opportunities for an education and purpose in life other than to think about Communism, or worse terrorism to proliferate Communist ideology.

In the middle of 1951, two events occurred that influenced the course of the war.¹¹⁹ First, the insurgents began to target women and children in their attacks. Granted, women and children had previously died during the war, but for the first time, women and children were intentionally targeted and attacked. The CPM became more aggressive in response to the effectiveness of the Briggs Plan and other measures that were countering the efforts of the Communists. The second event occurred on 6 October 1951, when the Malayan High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney was assassinated in an ambush while traveling with his wife.¹²⁰ The event in and of itself was inconsequential, but the significance of Gurney's death was that his replacement General Sir Gerald Templer

would be able to do what Gurney failed to accomplish as Malayan High Commissioner.¹²¹

The Communists Lose Initiative

The assassination of Sir Henry Gurney was a shock to the Malayan people as there was disbelief that the British High Commissioner could be killed. The assassination reduced the morale of the British soldiers, government officials, and security forces making the event one of the low points for the war. Ironically, Chin Peng and the CPM realized that their campaign of terror was failing.¹²² The CPM lost the initiative because of their realization that their terror tactics were counter-productive in winning the support of the population. Late in 1951, Chin Peng issued the October 1951 Directive to the CPM insurgents which was a reversal of tactics for the Communists.¹²³ The directive was an attempt to win the support of the masses. The insurgents were ordered to stop seizing registration cards, ration cards, attacking infrastructure, derailing trains, and avoid civilian casualties. The directive ordered that British medical and health professionals would not be targeted for attacks, but the attacks on security forces would continue. The directive's other mandate called for the CPM to become more involved in the legal system and to pursue infiltration of trade unions and other legitimate government and commercial organizations.¹²⁴

The change in strategy for the CPM signaled that Chin Peng acknowledged the terror tactics were a failure. Fortunately for the CPM, the morale of the Communists was aroused by the success of Mao Tse-tung in China and the Communist China's intervention in the Korean War.¹²⁵ But external political events in Great Britain

suppressed the CPM's motivation inspired by Communist China and increased the attention on Malaya.

On 21 October 1951, Sir Winston Churchill was elected British Prime Minister.¹²⁶ Churchill realized that Communism was spreading throughout Asia as events in Korea unfolded. Churchill also recognized that the war was costly and the consequences of losing Malaya to the Communists was too great stating, "If Malaya goes, all of the Far East goes."¹²⁷

In February of 1952, General Gerald Templer arrived in Malaya as the new High Commissioner.¹²⁸ Templer's arrival was monumental in improving the troops' morale and increasing the size of the coalition fighting the CPM. When Templer identified problems, he would assess and immediately correct. Templer demanded unity among the soldiers of the coalition; the British, Rhodesians, Gurkhas, Africans, Fijians, Malays, Chinese, and Indians. Templer wanted to win the hearts and minds of the people. Templer approached this by several ways; he built more schools, trained more teachers, trained more construction workers, provided tours for the people to see how conditions were improving, increased the capacity of the Red Cross, built community centers, and involved women in civic duties by establishing women's institutions.

Templer focused particularly on the local police called the Chinese Home Guards.¹²⁹ The Home Guards, and its auxiliaries, lacked cohesion, training, organization, and equipment, but had the potential to assist in the defeat of the Communists. Throughout 1952, a new phase of the war would take place in which the Malayan local police forces would be improved and contribute significantly to the defeat of the Communists.¹³⁰ The Chinese Home Guards proved to be effective in protecting the New

Villages and in patrolling areas to protect civilians. The police forces, to include the Chinese Home Guards, are attributed to being the most important part of the counterinsurgency. Clutterbuck (1967) wrote, “The decisive element in doing all these things in Malaya was the police force; counter-insurgency is a matter of restoring law and order, and law and order is a matter for policemen with the training and the lawful status for the task.”¹³¹

The counterinsurgency efforts of the British and security forces began to wear on Chin Peng and the CPM. The CPM was forced to seek refuge further into the jungles unable to obtain support from civilians. British Special Operations Forces pursued the CPM insurgents forcing them further into the jungle. In the spring of 1953, Chin Peng fled Malaya and traveled to Thailand, which was neutral in the war.¹³² Additionally, many of the key leadership within the CPM had been killed or captured. The Communist insurgency was defeated.

By 1954, the CPM insurgents were forced to the jungle, the leadership of the Communists was dismantled, and the insurgency was rendered combat ineffective.¹³³ Chin Peng would remain in exile in Thailand and General Templer would soon depart Malaya. The Malayan Emergency was seven year old and there would be significant political turmoil over the next six years, but the Communist insurgency was effectively defeated and Malaya was on the path to becoming an independent nation. The cost of the victory was considered well worth it to the British government in order to prevent the spread of Communism and protect British economic interests. Although, the financial cost of the Malayan Emergency overshadowed domestic expenditures in Great Britain, Churchill considered the cost acceptable. Following successful democratic elections,

Malaysia gradually became a prosperous, culturally diverse nation, free from the tyranny of Communism.

Why was the Malaya Emergency a Successful Counterinsurgency?

The Malaya Emergency is considered among the most successful counterinsurgencies in modern history. Malaya has been used by militaries, to include the U.S. military, to model and emulate best COIN practices. There are many scholars and soldiers though who will argue that British were not that successful in defeating the insurgency in Malaya, especially the first couple of years. COIN is difficult and there are truly no irrefutable winners due to the nature of COIN. In most conflicts involving an insurgency there is considerable loss of civilian life, destruction to infrastructure, and chaos as a result of a failed government and poor economic conditions. Malaya, however, can provide some very important lessons learned in the application of successful COIN principles. The intent is to focus on the reasons why the British was successful in defeating the Communist insurgency.

After the Malaya Emergency was officially over in 1960, Malaya was an independent nation.¹³⁴ Today, Malaya is relatively peaceful, the nation is independent, and the diverse ethnic population lives in harmony, much like they did prior to World War II. Malaya can attribute their current existence to the effectiveness of the British military during the Malaya Emergency.

The first success occurred once the British realized that a defensive posture was inadequate to protect the plantations, mines, and infrastructure. Once the police were armed and additional police recruited capable of actively patrolling did the British gain

momentum to defeat the guerillas. The police were also given more powers to facilitate searches and arrests.

Initially, the Malaya Emergency did not receive the full attention of the British government. Fortunately, once Sir Winston Churchill was elected as Prime Minister of Great Britain, interest and support for Malaya increased to enable the defeat of the Communists. Churchill realized the strategic importance in defeating the Communists and thus allotted the necessary resources to the conflict.

The Briggs Plan was the most significant contribution to the British success in Malaya. The plan was essential in isolating the insurgents from the population. The plan denied the Communist insurgents their most beneficial recruiting population, the Chinese squatters. The plan eliminated the support for the insurgents, forcing them deeper into the jungles and starving the guerillas. The local police that were established within the villages were able to protect the vulnerable population. The plan demonstrated to the people that the government could effectively protect them from the intimidation of the insurgents and provide them with education, medical care, and a safe place to live. The Briggs Plan applied successful COIN practices throughout the areas of security, governance, development.

Afghanistan, 2001 to Present

Afghanistan is a land-locked nation situated in Central Asia, bordered to the north by Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan; to the east China; to the south, Pakistan; and to the west is Iran. Afghanistan is slightly smaller than the state of Texas with a land area of 652,230 square kilometers.¹³⁵ The terrain is mostly rugged mountains with fertile

plains and basins in the north, and desert southern plateaus in the south. The climate is arid to semiarid, with dry summers and wet winters.¹³⁶

Afghanistan's geographic location made the area a crossroads of cultures and a shatter-belt of civilizations. Afghanistan has been conquered and subjugated throughout history to include the Greeks, Macedonians, Turks, Arabs, Mongols, Persians, the British, and Soviets, as well as other kingdoms, empires, and nations. Afghanistan's turbulent history, austere environment, and geographic disposition has resulted in the formation of a country seemingly constantly at war. There is no single ethnic majority in the country as the population consists of multiple ethnic groups. The largest ethnic group is the Pashtuns which constitute less only 42 percent of the 31 million person population.¹³⁷ The remainder of the population consists of the Tajiks at 27 percent, the Hazara at 9 percent, the Uzbek at nine percent, the Turkmen at three percent, and other ethnic groups representing the remaining ten percent of the ethnically diverse population.¹³⁸

The country is predominately 80 percent Sunni Muslim and 19 percent Shia Muslim. Religious ideology would combine with Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism against the United States that would result on the attacks on 11 September 2001.¹³⁹ The attacks ignited the "Global War on Terror" and began Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan (OEF-A). Al Qaeda, supported by the Taliban, once just another warring faction among other warring factions vying for power in Afghanistan, would claim responsibility, and their al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden would become the most hunted man on Earth until he was killed by United States Naval Special Operations SEALs from SEAL Team Six in 2011.¹⁴⁰ However, despite the death of Osama bin Laden, the insurgency in Afghanistan continued, the GIROA remained incapable of securing it

borders, and lawlessness was prevalent throughout the remote areas in hospitable locations in the country.

The Birth of the Taliban

After the last Soviet tank departed Afghanistan in 1980, the *mujahedeen*, who the U.S. supported to defeat the Soviet Union, devolved into multiple warring factions.¹⁴¹ Each of these factions fought for power within a feudal system with a very weak and powerless central government capable of intervening. In 1994, one faction emerged from a system of religious schools in Pakistan.¹⁴² The Taliban, translated as “students of religion,” began to gain influence among the population with the goal of ending the destructive factionalism among the various warlords by instituting strict Islamic, or Sharia law.¹⁴³ The Pashtuns were most receptive to the Taliban, and by 1996 were able to defeat the Afghanistan government security forces in Kabul.¹⁴⁴ By 1998, the final Uzbek and Tajik strongholds in the north were seized by the Taliban, and Afghanistan came under full control of the Taliban.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, Pakistan remained supportive of the Sunni regime and continued to host approximately four million refugees from the Soviet occupation.

Prior to the Taliban rule, conditions in Afghanistan were already deplorable with low birth rates, short life expectancies, high infant mortalities, and displaced civilians scattered throughout the region. The Taliban instituted strict Islamic law and thus reduced the already devastated country into a seeming “dark ages.” The Taliban eliminated any educational or employment opportunities for women, restricted their movement, and limited women’s rights.¹⁴⁶ Punishments for violating Sharia law included public executions by stoning victims to death and publicly administered amputations. Education

was restricted only to males, while secular books were destroyed, music was banned, and the cultural arts were outlawed. Cultural artifacts and historical sites were destroyed and eliminated from existence.

On the morning of 11 September 2001, Osama bin Laden's mastermind plan to economically destroy the United States was carried out against several targets within America.¹⁴⁷ By the end of the day, the two towers at the World Trade Center would be destroyed by two airliners, another airliner struck the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and fourth airliner would crash into a field in Pennsylvania as the result of several brave passengers forcing the terrorists to crash the plane and missing their intended target, the White House. Over 3,000 people would parish in the attacks and the obscure group known as the al Qaeda would claim responsibility.¹⁴⁸ Within in months, USSOF would deploy to Afghanistan to begin Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan (OEF-A).

Village Stability Operations (VSO)

The strategies to defeat the Taliban and establish a legitimate Afghanistan government have morphed and evolved since Operation Enduring Freedom began in 2001.¹⁴⁹ Initially, a small group of Green Berets linked up with the Northern Alliance in northern Afghanistan in order to build an indigenous army to fight the Taliban. Conventional army forces, to include coalition partners as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), initially maintained a small footprint. Due to increasing coalition casualties, American military forces surged in Afghanistan. Ultimately, the surge in forces proved effective and as a result the large-scale Taliban attacks became few and far between. Eventually, the Taliban numbers were reduced and their tactics changed. The Taliban capability to conduct conventional attacks was

rendered nominal, but guerilla warfare and terrorist attacks remained trademark of the Taliban. Most of the Taliban strongholds were destroyed and leadership sought refuge in remote areas or in Pakistan. Tactically, most Taliban fighters conducted small-scale ambushes as combatant strengths plummeted. However, the Taliban managed to seek refuge in remote areas distant from large Forward Operating Bases (FOB) and remained effective in attacking coalition forces with improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The Taliban continued to receive support from state actors, namely Pakistan, and from the Afghan population. Much of the Afghan population supported the Taliban as a result of any previous Afghan government system being incapable of governing the country. Other support was garnered through intimidation and threats against the Afghan people. The Taliban understood the populated areas in remote areas were preferable support bases for military operations. Likewise, the coalition understood that the civilian populations in these remote location were vulnerable to the Taliban and would continue to provide refuge and recruitment for the Taliban.

Evolution of VSO

VSO and the ALP programs officially began in August 2010, however, as early as 2005 the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force–Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) established the Afghan Auxiliary Police program to build a local police force to protect the communities from the Taliban, and link governance and development directly to security.¹⁵⁰ The program was among the first to use the ‘bottoms-up’ approach and integrated the U.S. Department of State (DoS) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to increase governance and development capacity. However, this

early program ultimately failed due to the lack of a unified strategy and ‘top-down’ approach from the central government.¹⁵¹

Later the Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan (CFSOCC-A) was established and formed the Afghan Public Protection Program (APPP).¹⁵² This program recognized that remote villages were unable to benefit from the protection of ISAF or Afghan security forces. The program emulated the *arbakai* system that was effective in eastern Afghanistan in the early 20th century that provided village-level defense managed by legitimate tribal institutions.¹⁵³ Following evolutions of local village defense forces were developed, including the Community Defense Initiative (CDI) and later the Local Defense Initiative (LDI). The local security concept underwent several revisions, but there were universal concepts that were critical. Forces had to be from the local village, prospective members had to be vetted by their village leaders, recruits must serve their home village, recruits graduate standardized training, and continual oversight must ensure adequate quality and control was maintained as the security forces were being recruited, trained, and ultimately employed. The most important aspect of the program is that the local security force must be accountable to the local, and central government in order to prevent the misuse of the security forces.

Security, Governance, and Development

The VSO program uses a whole-of-government approach within a framework of COIN operations. The VSO programs consist of three categorized operations, or rather three focus areas: Security, Governance, and Development. The Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force–Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) is responsible for the VSO/ALP

program by establishing and maintaining security, developing and/or reinvigorating traditional governance structures, and providing the basis and opportunities for economic development.¹⁵⁴ USSOF with additional support from conventional forces conduct VSO. The interagency also participates and supports the VSO program. While the main focus of the USSOF forces is security effort, VSO requires a whole-of-government approach and includes coordination and collaboration with other government entities to include: the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), as well as other non-governmental organizations such as the Afghan Social Outreach Program, Red Crescent, and Medicins sans Frontieres. International governmental organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the appropriate subordinate directorates can also contribute to the whole-of-government approach.

Security is arguably the most important in the first phases of VSO. Without security, governance and development is difficult to establish and maintain. Therefore the establishment of ALP is critical in order for security to take hold. To accomplish this, USSOF approach villages that are considered of strategic importance, and procures support and approval from village elders. Once the village elders agree to allow the USSOF team to recruit an ALP force, the village assists in vetting the recruits. Once the recruits have been vetted and selected, the USSOF begin to train and equip the locally selected recruits. The security aspect is ideal for USSOF as recruiting, training, equipping, and employing ALP is congruent to the execution of Foreign Internal Defense (FID).

Once a village gives the team approval to establish ALP program, the team will establish a Village Stability Platform (VSP) within the village. The VSP is the operating base for VSO and where the USSOF and supporting elements will live. The team will live within the village on the confines of the VSP where they will begin to build the ALP and increase the capacity of governance and development. The VSP location in the village in which the ALP is forming is conducive to strengthening the relations with the locals and demonstrates that the Americans are willing to share the danger of any insurgent reprisals. The VSP location in the village is important because trust and confidence is built among the village because the VSP can respond to any attack by insurgents. The quick response also shows the Afghans resolve that the Americans are there to genuinely help.

Governance capability for the village is built using the existing Afghanistan tribal system. The *shura*, or village meeting, is the venue in which problems are presented, solutions discussed, and problems resolved.¹⁵⁵ The *shura* is an Afghan process run by the village elders. VSO incorporates the *shura* into the VSO methodology and ensures that the *shura* system is remains a vital, Afghan-led tool for increasing governance capacity, decision-making, and problem resolution. The *shura* is also used at the District level as a means to resolve conflict, share information, and share ideas. Members of the VSO participate in the District *shura* as necessary, either as a guest attendee, listener, or contributor to the meeting to facilitate problem solving.

VSO utilizes various tools to increase governance capacity ranging from advising, coaching, and mentoring local, village, and district leadership. Additionally, development is linked to governance as projects can be part of the tools to provide capabilities for the

local government. The projects vary, but can include improving government facilities and systems, and can be more economic or developmental in nature to demonstrate to the populace that the Afghan government can be effective.

The VSP has other resources available to assist with governance. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Department of State are key to the unity of effort in fostering effective governance by the Afghan officials. USAID works with the VSP, and Afghan District and Provincial government officials to increase government capacity. Additionally, several intergovernmental and non-governmental agencies work to provide assistance to the various ministries within the government. District and Provincial Augmentation Teams (DAT and PAT) are located near their respective District Governors (DGOV) and Provincial Governors (PGOV) to assist, mentor, and develop the governors and line ministers in effective governance. Both teams also contribute to development through the implementation of various projects. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) works closely with the VSPs and the Ministry of Rural Development to assist the government with programs to educate and improve agricultural practices in rural areas. The intent of the VSO program with regards to governance is for local government to be administered by Afghans and directly tied into their functioning district government. While the focus of VSO is not necessarily the District, VSO must work with the local leaders and district government to become linked. Many VSO locations are selected because of the sites strategic importance. Typically, the villages are so remote and the district government is unable to influence and impact the people. The Taliban, insurgents, and criminals are therefore able to gain influence with the population and create a refuge within the remote villages.

The overall objective for governance is for the local government in the village to be capable of self-governing, capable of solving their own problems and decision-making via their traditional tribal systems (*shura*), and willing to participate as part of the District Government. Likewise, the District Government must also be a self-governing entity, capable of effectively administering their districts, and supporting the local village governments within their respective governments. Many of the problems associated with governance at the village and district levels are a result of corruption, lack of efficiency, antiquated systems, absent support from next echelon of government, tribal bias and disputes, ethnic prejudices, and constant political struggles. One ODA team focused on three areas to improve governance in their district: empowering the District Governor (DGOV), establishing the Afghan National Security Force's (ANSF) monopoly on the legitimate use of force, and improving the efficacy of the district government.¹⁵⁶ Within the district, the District Governor (DGOV) and the District Chief of Police (DCOP) share the leadership within the government, but often the relationship is dysfunctional as both compete for power. The VSO program works to encourage cooperation between these leaders as they both impact and influence governance and security.

Local villages in Afghanistan typically have the most underdeveloped economic systems within districts. The cause for underdevelopment throughout the villages can be contributed to many factors such as lack of security, no supporting infrastructure, no access to markets, and no government interest in development in isolated regions, among others. Populations in these remote villages are often vulnerable to insurgent influence to join or support the Taliban, or become involved in criminal activities. The inadequate development and underdeveloped economic systems, coupled with the district

government's inability to spur development, results in increased poverty, lack of educational opportunities, high unemployment, high rates of illness, malnutrition, and no means to improve people's lives. As a result, the people lose confidence in the government to provide basic services and create some opportunities for a better life. The consequence of this economic deprivation is that often the Taliban can find willing Afghans, particularly young men, to join their ranks and in many instances earn some money to support themselves and their families. Therefore, development is a critical component of the VSO strategy. Development provides the opportunity to improve Afghans' lives, increase government capacity and legitimacy, and prevent Taliban recruitment and support. In essence, development is key in countering the insurgency. As development builds roads, wells, schools, infrastructure, and creates employment for Afghans, then the government is perceived as effective and the attraction and power of the insurgency is diminished.

Development occurs at all levels of government in Afghanistan. Often, projects, programs, and initiatives benefit both development and governance. Many development projects are focused on improving government capacity, but other focus on improving economic development at the village level. Often bazaars are constructed to provide an opportunity for farmer to trade or buy goods. Roads are also built to promote trade and commerce between multiple locations and improve communication between a village and the district center. Other projects include building schools, constructing, refurbishing mosques, and improving water and irrigation systems. Development also takes the form of technical education in which people are taught a trade or skill. These initiatives are often include sewing classes, livestock management, water management, education,

improved agricultural practices, and medical training. Villages are predominantly agricultural so farming and herding are usually the two most common trades practiced. In order to promote economic growth, many Special Operations Task Forces (SOTF) use financial micro-grants or loans to support and encourage economic development. Farmers and businesses use the micro-grants or loans to increase productivity and capacity. The investment is worthwhile as successful business models create employment opportunities and result in more money coming into the village. Common application of successful micro-grants can be found in chicken farming, animal husbandry, local contractors (builders, masons, well-diggers, and blacksmiths), mechanics, sewing, and shopkeepers.

Large-scale development happening near a VSP can positively impact a village, as well as the district and province. Road construction projects typically exemplifies large scale construction. These projects not only improve commerce, communication, and logistics, but provide employment opportunities for locals. Other large scale projects include building construction, however, unless the construction is occurring in the village, then the immediate benefits are less evident to the village and the VSP.

Development projects and initiatives are typically managed by Civil Affairs Teams (CAT) at the VSP. The Civil Affairs Teams (CAT) are critical to the success of VSO and are the subject matter experts in project management. Civil Affairs Teams (CAT) also provide knowledge and experience with regard to governance.

Development directly increases government and security capacity. VSO often results in the construction of schools, roads, government centers, police stations, and medical clinics. The construction projects support VSO by improving communications, commerce, support the district, security, and safety. Both the District Governor (DGOV)

and the District Chief and Police (DCOP) can more effectively administer the government and execute their duties and responsibilities. Additionally, both can improve communications and responses to the villages concerns. As a result, the Afghan government gains increased legitimacy and power. VSO teams work to demonstrate that the district government is effective and capable in order to legitimize the government in the eyes of the villagers.

Development and governance are reliant upon effective security. As already mentioned, security is first and foremost in the success of VSO. As the capacity and capability of the ALP increases, security will improve in the area. VSO must ensure that the ALP provide security for their village, but must be able to be incorporated into combined operations with the Afghan National Police (ANP) and Afghan National Army (ANA). The ALP must complement the ANA efforts in security. Joint patrols between ALP and ANP are common and build cohesion between the ANSF while increasing Afghan pride, national unity, and common purpose. As the ALP become more effective, the forces prove more than capable to protect their villages, ongoing projects, and provide intelligence. The ALP have proved themselves to their villages and to the ANP as effective security forces and force multipliers in defeating the insurgency in Afghanistan. However, while the ALP is not a perfect program security in the strategic locations has made significant improvements. Insurgents have been killed or forced to seek refuge at other safe havens due to the actions of the ALP. The ALP are taking responsibility for the security of their villages and have instilled pride in their communities as they strive for a unified Afghan government.

Comparing the Three Counterinsurgencies

In comparing and contrasting the Philippines War, the Malayan Emergency, and VSO in Afghanistan the reader must understand that there are differences in the application of doctrine between the United States and Britain. There is also a difference of approximately 50 years between each of the counterinsurgencies which must be considered as the global operational environment had changed. Another factor to consider is how the development and evolution of technology has influenced both the insurgents and the counterinsurgents. The advent of the internet, social media, robust air transportation, and the rate that information travels has exponentially increased in the past several decades, have all contributed to COIN efforts. While it is important to consider the impact of technology in warfare, the focus of this thesis is not technology. The purpose of this comparison is to use current doctrine and effective COIN practices to demonstrate why the counterinsurgencies were successful.

First, security remained the foremost concern for all the counterinsurgent forces in the counterinsurgencies. At the onset of the Philippines War, the United States Army was perhaps one of most experienced military forces with counter-guerilla or COIN operations. During the Reconstruction Era from 1865 to 1898, the U.S. Army served as “a national police” and dealt with clandestine security threats to include the Ku Klux Klan and the Red Shirts that terrorized the Southern States.¹⁵⁷ The Americans experience with security also included the experiences with the Native Americans in the Western Frontier throughout the latter half of the 19th century. The U.S. Army learned many hard-earned lessons against the Native Americans uprisings and guerilla tactics which would be captured institutionally and enable the creation of doctrine. From 1898 to 1902, the

United States had its first experience in overseas nation building in Cuba to include conducting what is known today as stability operations.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, prior to the Philippines War, the Americans had experience in counterinsurgency within the previous 50 years.

The U.S. Army in the Philippines recruited indigenous Filipinos to initially function as laborers and workers to move supplies, but their indigenous population support to the Americans increased. Within the first year of the war, indigenous police forces numbered 29,000. Indigenous persons, not only provided support to security with police forces, but intelligence and information provided by the Filipinos proved invaluable.¹⁵⁹

In the Philippines War, the application of tactics changed when first, the lenient policies in dealing with the insurgents failed, and second, when Emilio Aguinaldo adopted guerilla tactics after acknowledging his conventional warfare capabilities were defeated. The U.S. Army was capable of changing the strategy mid-course in the war. At this time, the U.S. Army was applying benign pacification measures and had been fighting mostly an enemy employing conventional tactics. The U.S. Army was the far superior force compared to the insurgency, although Emilio Aguinaldo and his *insurrectos* had experience fighting the Spanish years earlier. The U.S Army's ability to adapt to a changing enemy allowed them to develop a new strategy while employing new tactics to defeat a guerilla force.

The U.S. Army recognized that any *insurrecto* refuge must be destroyed or eliminated. In the process of destroying the *insurrecto* support network and infrastructure, Filipino civilians increasingly became internally displaced persons. The

U.S. Army was careful to ensure that the displaced persons were moved to camps that for the majority of the people was much better than the villages they were forced to flee. As a result, the civilian population was protected and the insurgents were isolated from the populace.

In the Malayan Emergency, the British initially employed a static defensive posture at the onset of the revolution to protect rubber plantations, tin mines, and other key infrastructure. The British improved the police force by providing first, weapons, and then increased recruiting efforts. As a colonial power, the British were accustomed to using indigenous forces to augment their security apparatus. The Communist Party of Malaya was a predominately ethnic Chinese organization, and much of the group's recruitment and support came from the Chinese squatter population. The British developed the Chinese Home Guard to increase their security capacity, while also simultaneously protecting the civilian population and isolating the insurgents from the populace.

Later in the Malayan Emergency as the insurgents were forced deeper into the Malayan jungles and defeat for the CPM appeared to be more imminent. The insurgents who surrendered to the British were offered an opportunity for reintegration. The British formed the Special Operations Volunteer Force (SOVF)¹⁶⁰ comprised of ex-CPM insurgents that were effective as a security force while also providing relevant human intelligence about the CPM. Recruiting and utilizing ex-insurgents as part of the legitimate Malayan government security forces is a force multiplier for the counterinsurgent forces. The advantages of using the former CPM insurgents include the intelligence value, the increase security capacity, and the psychological impact of the

degradation of morale to the Communists starving in the jungle. This also identified the insurgents and separated them from the Malayan population. The cumulative effects using former insurgents from the CPM as a local police force was truly beneficial to the British counterinsurgency.

The British increased the security further by forming an international coalition with Australia, New Zealand, and other nations. A coalition is advantageous in any military operation as it provides additional assets, personnel, and adds legitimacy to the operation.

Another security aspect of the Malayan Emergency that proved critical to the British eventual counterinsurgency success was the implementation of the 'Briggs Plan.' The Briggs Plan allowed the British to isolate the civilian populations from the insurgents by building the New Villages.¹⁶¹ This denied the insurgents their support system and forced them further into the jungles of Malaya. The plan not only contributed to improved security at the local level, but enabled development to occur at the lowest level in government, and fostered local government with the New Village (although New Village government systems were not very successful).

Any counterinsurgency must have an indigenous police force to be successful. In VSO, the ALP provides an indigenous police force with the added benefit that the local police that are assigned to a village are from that village. The benefits of the ALP system is that each ALP member is familiar with the village, and intimately knows the terrain and the population. The ALP member in this case can provide timely intelligence by identifying who belongs in a village and who is a stranger. The ALP member can also provide information for the VSP to understand the relationships between power brokers

and key leaders. Both the Philippines War and the Malayan Emergency used some variant of local defense forces or police forces successfully in counterinsurgency.

VSO were partly initiated to address the problem of the Taliban seeking refuge in remote areas in Afghanistan that were difficult to access by ISAF. The evolution of VSO into the main effort of the CJSOTF-A demonstrated that the U.S. Army is capable of adopting new strategies, tactics, and techniques to defeat an insurgency. The VSO strategy effectively isolates the village from the insurgents, although not by moving the local population to camps, but by inserting USSOF and military forces into a community that supports insurgents or serves as an insurgent stronghold. This technique is contradictory to what was successful in the historical case studies, but is highly effective. VSO is also less expensive financially, requires less personnel, and requirements for significant amounts of other resources, materials, and subject matter experts minimal compared to constructing and managing camps. The U.S. Army was forced to build camps for the displaced civilians, the British Briggs Plan key point was to construct camps for the civilian population, but in VSO, the USSOF live among the civilians and take the fight to the insurgents. All techniques are unique, and given each particular insurgency proved to be effective.

Similar to the U.S. Army in the Philippines and the British in Malaya, USSOF that conduct VSO, also have experience conducting COIN operations and training foreign defense forces COIN. USSOF are truly the best practitioners for VSO given the experience with USSOCOM throughout the last decade. USSOF is also well-suited to conduct VSO due to the applicability of the core operations and activities that include

Foreign Internal Defense (FID), COIN, Counterterrorism (CT), Unconventional Warfare (UW), and Stability Operations (SO).¹⁶²

The one distinct difference of the insurgency in Afghanistan compared to the Philippines and Malaya, is that the insurgency in Afghanistan has significant external support from state and non-state actors. The insurgencies in the Philippines and Malaya benefitted from an external support apparatus. The Communists in Malaya, however, did gain moral support from Communist China through the victories of Mao Tse-dung and Chinese support to Communist North Korea. The Communist in East Asia were in no position to provide any support as it seemed Communist China was engaged in North Korea against the American coalition and the French in Vietnam throughout the duration of the Malayan Emergency. Comparatively, the insurgency in Afghanistan receives significant external support which has enabled the Taliban to continue to fight the coalition and the Government of Afghanistan for over a decade. Pakistan has provided support to the Taliban with financial and material support, as well as providing refuge across the Pakistani border. In fact, Pakistan supported the Taliban during the Soviet invasion in hopes they could establish a central government and stabilize the country.

Geography is an important factor that impacts the security of a state. The Philippines is an archipelago so movement throughout the islands was difficult for the insurgents, as well as the counterinsurgent forces. With no immediate borders, insurgents had difficulty seeking refuge in neighboring states. Malaya is a peninsula so movement over land was restricted within the country as the U.S. Navy dominated the South China Sea after the defeat of the Spanish fleet. The only refuge for the Communists was Thailand to the north, but Thailand declared neutrality and did not support the CPM.

However, Chin Peng the president of the CPM eventually fled to Thailand to avoid capture as the Communist leadership was killed and captured and the insurgency began to capitulate making way for elections in Malaya. The geographic location of Afghanistan historically has made the country a crossroads for cultures. Throughout Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Afghanistan has been a destination for terrorists and foreign fighters alike. The porous Afghan border allows for movement into and out of the country for Taliban to flee from being captured or killed. Foreign fighters and *mujahedeen* enter Afghanistan from the border. The mountainous terrain also increases the probability that areas will inevitably lack security and provides refuge for insurgents. Geographic position, porous boundaries, and mountainous terrain have contributed to the deteriorated security problem in Afghanistan.

Governance in the Philippines, Malaya, and Afghanistan have all focused on the indigenous population assuming responsibility for civil government, if not immediately, at least upon conclusion of hostilities. In the Philippines, the U.S. Army established a military governor with military district governors. Subordinate U.S. Army officers served as government officials, but as the war progressed, the Filipino social elite initially served in civil government positions. As the insurrectos were defeated, more Filipinos began to assume more responsibility for their government. Ultimately, the military governors and officers returned all government positions to the Filipinos once the insurgency was defeated, demonstrating that the United States was not another colonial power.

In Malaya, the British traditionally governed the country in conjunction with the Sultans.¹⁶³ However, following World War II, many Malaysians thought independence was in their future.¹⁶⁴ The Malaysians did not expect that upon the return of the British, that the

British would rewrite the Malayan constitution without consent from the Malayan government. There was harmony between the Malaysians and the British prior the Japanese invasion, but the British disrupted that peaceful relationship. Fortunately, throughout the duration of the Malayan Emergency, the British emphasis was for the Malaysians to self-govern at all levels. The end state for the British was to stabilize the country for economic interests. The Briggs Plan even promoted that within the New Villages that Filipinos would run the local government.¹⁶⁵ Although the Malayan Emergency would continue until 1960, democratic elections were held in 1955 and military operations in Malaya effectively concluded in 1957.¹⁶⁶ The last five years of the Malayan Emergency was a struggle between the various political entities to establish an effective democratic government.

Throughout Afghanistan, the goal is for the country to be Afghan-led. All levels of government are run by an appointed or elected Afghan official. VSO promotes the use of traditional tribal systems of government with the *shura*. The *shura* is an Afghan system that has been effective for centuries. The *shura* is village governance in its purest form. In villages where the *shura* has been ineffective due to tribal issues, ethnic tensions, or security threats, USSOF team members facilitate the *shura*. As the situation at the VSP improves the responsibility for facilitating the *shura* will transition from the USSOF team member to the Afghan leadership.

In the traditional village governance system, the village elder(s), the religious leaders (*malik*), or elected village elders, form the village government.¹⁶⁷ VSPs encounter villages with varying support for the District Government. While some villages support the GIRoA, others either feel the government provides no service or value to the people,

and unable to provide basic services. Other Afghans are indifferent, or are patiently waiting for yet another government to fail. VSO bridges the gap between the local village government and the district government. VSO provides various tools that are effective in empowering the District Governor (DGOV) and District Chief of Police (DCOP), to include funding, support, and resources unavailable through GIRoA systems.

Throughout the Philippines, Malaya, and Afghanistan, development is has been a critical component of the overall counterinsurgency strategy. Militaries traditionally are adverse to development, or nation building, but the current operational environment will involve enormous efforts in addressing the cause of insurgencies. Many, if not most insurgencies, are a result in a government's inability to provide for their populations. Life becomes so intolerable that elements within the population take it upon themselves to dispose of the government. The reasons for an uprising or insurrection varies, but typically there is a cause. Often the causes are a result of a lack of opportunity for a better life. Development addresses this lack of opportunity by creating or improving infrastructure, systems, and programs that promote sustainable education, employment, or a necessity for life.

The U.S. Army in the Philippines improved the life of the Filipinos with various development initiatives such as building schools, medical clinics, and improving the infrastructure. The British took the same approach with development as they included the construction of schools, medical clinics, roads, and community centers as part of the New Villages designs under the Briggs Plan.¹⁶⁸ The British also implemented other programs to improve the lives of women by providing them progressive opportunities traditionally unavailable to Asian women. These programs involved learning trade skills to

employment opportunities. The intent of the Briggs Plan was to provide the Malaysians with an improved life, while isolating the insurgents from the population.¹⁶⁹ The British were even able to convince the Malayan government to grant ethnic Chinese farmers land to farm adjacent to their homes in the New Villages. Using development as a tool, the British were able to protect the population and isolate the insurgents from the populace.

Development is critical to defeating an insurgency. VSO uses development to reduce the ability of the insurgency to recruit within the villages. Development is also used to demonstrate the legitimacy of the Afghan government. VSO has successfully deterred the influence of the Taliban by sponsoring the construction of schools, clinics, roads, and other infrastructure at the village level. Other initiatives include providing short-term employment as well as long-term programs that provide sustainable income. Development programs within the VSO framework include interagency and intergovernmental partners. While the U.S. Army and the British did not integrate the interagency or intergovernmental organizations into development at the same magnitude as in VSO, the benefits of development proved to be significant in defeating the insurgencies.

Conclusion

Since the end of the American Civil War the U.S. Army has been fighting insurgents and guerillas. During the Reconstruction Era from the end of the American Civil War from 1865 to 1898, the U.S. Army was “a national police” force while reuniting the Union.¹⁷⁰ Many officers and soldiers served as engineers, laborers, policemen, border guards, explorers, administrators, and governors.¹⁷¹ The U.S. Army continued to learn about guerillas, insurgencies, and pacification efforts throughout the

remainder of the 19th century and into the 20th century.¹⁷² The Philippines War and the Malayan Emergency proved that through the careful application of successful counterinsurgency practices that any guerilla, insurgent, rebel, revolutionary, or terrorist organization can be defeated. The U.S. Army in the Philippines War, the British in Malaya, and USSOF in Afghanistan all apply successful counterinsurgency practices while avoiding unsuccessful techniques as outlined in chapter 1, page 1-29 Successful and Unsuccessful Counterinsurgency Practices:¹⁷³

1. Emphasize intelligence.
2. Focus on the population, its needs, and its security.
3. Establish and expand secure areas.
4. Isolate insurgents from the populace.
5. Provide amnesty and rehabilitation for those willing to support the new government.
6. Place host-nation police in the lead with military support as soon as the security situation permits.
7. Expand and diversify the host-nation police force.
8. Train military forces to conduct counterinsurgency operations.
9. Embed quality advisors and special forces with host-nation forces.
10. Deny sanctuary to insurgents.
11. Encourage strong political and military cooperation.
12. Secure host-nation borders.
13. Protect key infrastructure.

The three case studies within this thesis were successful due to the evidence that successful counterinsurgency practices were conducted routinely. Unsuccessful counterinsurgency practices were coincidentally avoided to further solidify success.

The Philippines War, Malayan Emergency, and Village Stability Operations in Afghanistan are overwhelmingly successful compared to some counterinsurgent efforts. Throughout the three counterinsurgencies several themes remained dominant. Separating the population from the insurgents was critical in order to deny insurgents sanctuary and to protect the population. Encouraging the indigenous population for self-government was critical to build governance capacity. Local police forces are essential in securing the population, and provide enhancement to counterinsurgency operations while building host nation security capacity.

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³Ibid.

⁴Robert D. Ramsey, III, *Savage Wars of Peace: Case Studies of Pacification in the Philippines, 1900-1902*, The Long War Series, Occasional Paper 24 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), 2.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., 5.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., 2.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., 4.

¹⁵Ibid., 6.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., 7.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid., 7-8.

³⁴Ibid., 7.

³⁵Ibid., 8.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Birtle, 99.

⁴²Ramsey III, 8.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., 9.

⁴⁷Ibid., 10.

⁴⁸Ibid., 11.

⁴⁹Ibid., 11.

⁵⁰Ibid., 13.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., 14.

⁵³Ibid., 20.

⁵⁴Ibid., 12.

⁵⁵Ibid., 22.

⁵⁶Ibid., 47.

⁵⁷Office of the U.S. Military Governor on the Philippine Islands, *Criminal Procedure 1900* (General Orders 58), 23 April 1900, <http://www.lawcenter.ph/library/supreme-court-issuances/rules-of-court/criminal-procedure-1900-general-order-no-58-april-23-1900/> (accessed 22 November 2013).

⁵⁸Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860-1941* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1998), 120.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 119.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 120.

⁶²Ramsey III, 22.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 23.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 23-24.

⁶⁶Birtle, 120.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 121.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 122.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 125.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 122.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 123.

⁷³*Ibid.*

⁷⁴*Ibid.*

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 126.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 128.

⁷⁷Birtle, 126.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 132.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 135.

- ⁸¹Ibid.
- ⁸²Ibid., 108.
- ⁸³Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-16.
- ⁸⁴Birtle, 117.
- ⁸⁵Ramsey III, 47.
- ⁸⁶H .J de Blig and Peter O. Muller, *Geography: Realms, Regions, and Concepts* 2000, 9th ed. (New York, NY: Von Hoffman Press, 2000), 522-523.
- ⁸⁷Ibid., 518-519.
- ⁸⁸Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, "Malaysia," <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/my.html> (accessed 27 September 2013).
- ⁸⁹Noel Barber, *The War of the Running Dogs: How Malaya Defeated the Communist Guerillas 1948-1960* (London, Orion Books, 2004), 15.
- ⁹⁰Ibid., 19.
- ⁹¹Ibid., 18.
- ⁹²T. Dugdale-Pointon, "The Malayan Emergency (1947-1960)," 26 August 2007, http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/wars_malaya.html, (accessed 25 September 2013).
- ⁹³Ibid.
- ⁹⁴Anthony Shih, "The Roots and Societal Impact of Islam in Southeast Asia Interview With Professor Mark Mancall," *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs* 2 (Spring 2002), <http://www.stanford.edu/group/sjeaa/journal2/geasia2.pdf> (accessed 12 November 2013), 114.
- ⁹⁵Dugdale-Pointon.
- ⁹⁶Barber, 22.
- ⁹⁷Ibid., 84.
- ⁹⁸Ibid.
- ⁹⁹Ibid., 116.
- ¹⁰⁰Ibid., 119.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 111.

¹⁰²Ibid., 114.

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 59.

¹⁰⁵Barber, 115.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 118.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 116.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 115.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 119.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Ibid., 125.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Ibid., 128.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 129.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 130.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Ibid., 144.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 146.

¹²⁰Ibid., 157.

¹²¹Ibid., 173.

¹²²Ibid., 160.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Ibid., 161.

¹²⁶Ibid., 162.

¹²⁷Ibid., 163.

¹²⁸Ibid., 174.

¹²⁹Ibid., 215.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Ibid., 230.

¹³²Ibid.

¹³³Ibid., 230, 245.

¹³⁴Ibid., 304.

¹³⁵Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, “Afghanistan,” <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html> (accessed 3 October 2013).

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Ibid.

¹³⁹David H. Ucko, *The New Counterinsurgency: Transforming the U.S. Military for Modern Wars* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009), 54.

¹⁴⁰Peter Baker, Helene Cooper, and Mark Mazzetti, “Bin Laden is Dead, Obama Says,” *The New York Times*, 1 May 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/02/world/asia/osama-bin-laden-is-killed.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed 26 October 2013).

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¹⁴²Ibid.

¹⁴³Ibid., 332-333.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., 332.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 333.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷Ucko., 54.

¹⁴⁸Maria Newman, “Bin Laden Takes Responsibility for 9/11 Attacks in New Tape,” *The New York Times*, 29 October 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/29/international/30osamaCND.html> (accessed 20 October 2013).

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¹⁵³*Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 129.

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¹⁵⁶Rory Hanlin, “One Team’s Approach to Village Stability Operations,” *Small Wars Journal*, 4 September 2011, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/node/11412> (accessed 29 March 2013), 2.

¹⁵⁷Birtle, 57.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 100.

¹⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 117.

¹⁶⁰Barber, 233.

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁶²Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Reference Manual*, 3rd ed. (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: The JSOU Press, September 2011), 1-6.

¹⁶³Barber, 16.

¹⁶⁴Nagl, 62.

¹⁶⁵Barber, 129.

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¹⁶⁷The Collins English Dictionary, <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/malik> (accessed 1 July 2013).

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Chapter 5 answers the primary and two secondary research questions. The primary research question is: Has the Village Stability Operations methodology been a successful COIN strategy for CJSOTF-A in Afghanistan? The secondary questions are: (1) What changes or modifications are necessary to make VSO more successful in Afghanistan? and (2) Can the VSO methodology and strategy be applied to other operational environments in current or future COIN operations? Chapter 5 will link the research questions to the historical case studies of the Philippines War and the Malayan Emergency to VSO in Afghanistan.

Chapter 5 is organized into six parts. The first part will answer the primary research question identifying how and why VSO has been a successful COIN strategy in Afghanistan. The second part will answer the first secondary question by identifying and explaining what changes and modifications, are necessary to improve VSO. Part three will answer the second secondary question and determine the feasibility of applying the VSO model to other operational environments in current or future COIN operations. Part four includes the interpretation of the findings, the meaning of the results, the implications of the findings, and the unexpected findings of the research. Part five will include recommendations for further study, disclose unanswered questions, and explain how the research could have been approached differently. The final part will provide a summary and conclusion to close out chapter 5.

In chapter 4, two historical case studies of COIN operations were compared to VSO. Throughout the case studies many similarities remained constant despite the difference of fifty years between each counterinsurgency. First, COIN operations are inherently difficult and many scholars will argue that most counterinsurgencies have ultimately failed. Defining success or effectiveness is also challenging to accomplish as each and every insurgency is different and unique. Within each COIN operation there are markedly unique characteristics in the insurgents as well as the counterinsurgents. This was especially evident in the Philippines as the insurgency had varying characteristics in Luzon compared to Mindanao. VSO in Afghanistan varies from one SOTF to the next throughout the different districts and provinces. Chapter 4 determined the importance of establishing a local defense force and how important it is to include participation in their own government as soon as possible. Both historical examples demonstrated the effectiveness of establishing a local defense force to protect remote villages, camps, and “New Villages” and to build the capabilities of the national security forces. The ALP is the cornerstone of the VSO strategy; established to increase security capacity. Chapter 4 identified that throughout all effective COIN strategies, the importance of development cannot be overlooked as it increases the likelihood of economic development, alleviates immediate suffering, and provides opportunities to the populace. Development legitimizes the government and security functions in an area as both are integral as projects and construction occurs.

Has the Village Stability Operations methodology been successful?

Village Stability Operations can be considered successful when compared to the Philippines War and the Malayan Emergency, in that all three counterinsurgents

approached three unique problems with insurgencies focusing operational efforts on security, governance, and development. VSO in Afghanistan has been successful in providing security for rural villages where the Taliban held control. VSO has effectively disrupted the ability of the Taliban to conduct operations. Since the inception of VSO, Taliban attacks on coalition forces have been reduced. The ALP have been a critical augmentation to the ANSF by providing local security in their villages. However, VSO is unsustainable beyond a withdrawal of U.S. and coalition forces pending any security agreement between GIRoA and the U.S. to remain in Afghanistan past 2014.¹ The intent of the ALP was always to augment the ANP as part of the ANSF within the Ministry of the Interior (MOI).

VSO strategy has proven to be effective, but the degree of success ranges from minimal to significant, depending on location. The adage that ‘if you have seen one VSO you have seen one VSO’ can be paralleled with ‘success in VSO varies from one VSO location to another.’² Each VSP has experienced measured success in the areas of security, governance, and development independently and uniquely. Success then must be considered from a macro view throughout the entirety of the country. From a national perspective, VSO has proven to be effective in improving security, increasing governance capacity at the village and district levels, and undoubtedly improved development.

Determining the effectiveness of governance at each VSP would be the most challenging as governance is highly dependent upon human personalities, both Afghan and coalition. The dynamic nature of governance in Afghanistan further complicates measuring success as many local leaders, power brokers, and representatives of the district leadership are either assassinated, forced to relocate, get reassigned, or their

influence varies from one location to another. The relationship and influence that USSOF teams have also contribute to the dynamic nature of governance as well, making the task of measuring effectiveness that much more challenging. Overall, district government capacities have increased through the increased security of the ALP, support from the village leadership, and via development initiatives. The success of the Afghan government at the village and district level may not be known until some point beyond the end of 2014. The future of the Afghan government remains questionable if history is any indicator, the possibility of a successful government may prove to be elusive due to the ethnic diversity and historical conflict among the tribes. In a best case scenario the ANSF can continue to defeat the Taliban as the Afghan government continues to build capacity and increase effectiveness. In this best case scenario, Afghanistan in the near term may resemble Malaya from 1955 to 1960, where the British and Malayan government defeated the insurgency, but the country was undergoing a political struggle to determine the fate of the nation's future.³ The outcome for Malaysia resulted in a democratically elected government in which all ethnic groups currently live in harmony.

The centerpiece of VSO is the ALP. Throughout the 20th century, some form of a local, or village, defense force has always existed as a defense force protect villages. During the Soviet Union invasion, *jihadi* leaders used armed groups to defend local communities against the Soviet troops.⁴ The counterinsurgencies in the Philippines and Malaya were successful in part due to a local defense force was established. VSO is no different in that the ALP are the local defense force for contemporary Afghanistan. In keeping the ALP in context of their intent and purpose, then the ALP program has been successful in augmenting the ANSF Locations with ALP have reported overall decreased

attacks by the Taliban, and improved security. The effectiveness of the ALP has enabled many of the VSPs to close, and transition to alternate VSO locations. The ALP has been reportedly successful in improving the security situation in many areas to include: the Marjah, Nad Ali, Nawah, Garmssir, Gereshk, Musa Qala, and Sangin Districts in Helmand Province, and in Kunar, Kunduz, Jawzjan, Sar-e Pul, and Nuristan.⁵ The ALP program has proven effective in many areas despite the many problems that plague the ALP internally and those caused by the creation of the ALP. Considering that the ALP program was approved by President Hamid Karzai as a temporary security force for a one to five year time period, the program has been successful. In order to remain a successful program to counter the Taliban, and not to create another insurgency from the ALP ranks or from disgruntled villagers, the ALP must be disbanded and become part of the ANP when U.S. and coalition forces leave Afghanistan, or otherwise likely succumb to warlordism. Fortunately, reports from senior military leaders in Afghanistan are promising for the ANSF. Lieutenant General Mark Milley, deputy commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, stated that, “These guys are absolutely determined to fight for their country. And they’re doing a good job at it. And yes, they are suffering.”⁶ Approximately 100 Afghans are killed in combat weekly as ANSF assume more responsibility for security from coalition forces. Currently, the ANP, which include the ALP, have met all recruitment goals and slightly exceed retention goals of 60 percent with 63 percent of ANP/ALP re-enlisting.⁷ The recruiting and retention statistics indicate that the ANSF are succeeding in securing Afghanistan despite the increased casualty rates. As part of the broader ANSF, the ALP have effectively augmented the security forces on a temporary basis and proved vital to the improved security situation throughout rural Afghanistan.

What changes are necessary to make VSO more successful in Afghanistan?

ALP Recruitment and Vetting

According to the Procedure on the Establishment and Structure of the Local Police, Decree No. 3196 (16 August 2011) that established the ALP program as part of VSO, the “local police force is created . . . where local population is ready for and consents to its establishment.”⁸ In order for VSO to be successful, the local population must be willing to accept both USSOF presence and the population must be prepared to provide recruits. The recruitment process is susceptible to several problems that allow sub-standard recruits, Taliban, and criminals, to join the ranks of the ALP. The first problem is that the elders responsible for vetting the ALP recruits are often influenced by powerbrokers that use intimidation to coerce their decisions, or are controlling the elders responsible for vouching for the recruits. Another problem is the influence that Afghan security and government officials often have in the recruiting and vetting process. In Shindand District, Herat Province a senior security official stated, “Unfortunately, the recruitment process is not transparent and the influential figures and gun-lords are involved in the recruitment of these people or even some of them are recruited by the foreign forces.”⁹ The recruiting process is also influenced by some USSOF as there is pressure for the coalition to address the security issues throughout the country and as preparation for the 2014 withdrawal looms. There have been isolated cases where USSOF have reportedly recruited ALP without the local leadership properly vetting recruits. In Kunduz Province, the head of the ALP selection council stated, “Our list on the selection and recruitment of ALP was not taken into account and none of the current ALP members is in that list. The Americans themselves recruited those people, while

they are only responsible for equipping and training them.”¹⁰ When local leadership is not involved in the ALP recruiting and vetting process it is a violation of Afghan law. Often local power brokers with connections to the USSOF teams and government officials influence ALP selection. The motives for these power brokers and government officials range, but most are an attempt to consolidate power or create a buffer against their enemies. In Shindand District a senior police official stated, “They [ALP] are not selected by popular councils, but by foreign troops [USSOF].”¹¹ The official added, “Initially a number of local commanders . . . found connections in the foreign forces, proposed the creation of ALP in insecure areas in this district so as to maintain and buttress their power in those areas. The local and popular council had no say in the selection of these people.”¹² The purpose of the vetting process is to allow village leadership and local councils to identify and recommend ALP candidates for recruitment. Ideally, the village councils know the potential recruits, can verify they are of good character and not associated with the Taliban or other criminal organizations. Bypassing the vetting process denies the village leadership the opportunity to identify those ALP candidates who are not suitable for duty as ALP because of their background and associations. The vetting process should further legitimize the ALP, but when bypassed, the ALP program is viewed as corrupt, and becomes corrupt and dysfunctional due to the quality of recruits accepted into ALP training academies. The vetting and recruitment process requires that USSOF and Afghan leadership at all level follow the procedures for recruiting and vetting ALP recruits.

Failure in the ALP recruiting and vetting process resulted in insider attacks against American and coalition forces. In September 2012, the U.S. suspended ALP

training for a month due to 34 insider attacks that killed 45 international troops, with 12 of the insider attacks occurring in August.¹³ USSOF halted training for 1,000 ALP trainees with a USSOF spokesman stating, “The training of the ALP recruits has been paused while we go through this revetting process to see if there’s anything that we can improve. It may take a month. It may take two months. We don’t know.”¹⁴ The insider attacks demonstrated the importance of adhering to the recruiting and vetting process, regardless of influencers or pressures from the government to recruit ALP. The Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Ludin stated, “we had to go out and do a very large-scale recruitment because we had to really meet the targets, the recruitment targets set for us by the transition process . . . I suppose what happened in that process is that we perhaps overlooked some of the crucial screening requirements and, as a result, the enemy used that as an opportunity to infiltrate.”¹⁵ Violations of the vetting process is detrimental to the ALP program and VSO as a whole because it delegitimizes the program, endangers USSOF and coalition personnel conducting VSO, and increases the threat of insider attacks from Taliban infiltrators. The vetting process must be adhered to by all parties involved in the VSO or the quality of ALP and ultimate success of VSO will never be achieved.

Abuse of Power

Problems resulting from the ALP abusing their position of power have been reported throughout official government channels and in media. The abuses range from minor incidents to human rights violations and murder. Refugees International conducted interviews with displaced Afghans, local organizations, United Nations officials, aid workers, human rights researchers, government officials, security analysts, and journalist

in Kabul, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, and other areas, that revealed “the rapid rollout of the ALP program was widely criticized by Afghans and humanitarian actors. Almost every single one of the interviewees highlighted the growth of the ALP and the simultaneous rise of other pro-government militias as their top concern for the security of civilians and stability in the country . . . many told stories of ALP using their newly gained power and gun to harass, intimidate, and perpetrate crimes against the very civilians they were recruited, trained, and paid to protect.”¹⁶ In a September 2011 report, the organization Human Rights Watch accused the ALP of committing 46 human rights violations.¹⁷ An investigation by the United States Forces-Afghanistan determined that seven of those reports were credible while 14 were partially credible.¹⁸ Reports of human rights violations and crimes by ALP are predominant from various sources, whereas praise for the ALP is reported less frequently. Despite the successes of the ALP program, abuse of power by ALP is commonplace. In Kunduz and Farah, “after the ALP defeated the Taliban in their villages, they started extorting the communities and demanding taxes for themselves” and in Takhar “the ALP unit would identify its personal enemies as the Taliban for ISAF to get.”¹⁹ The ALP abuse of power is perhaps the most detrimental problem plaguing the ALP and directly correlates to the vetting and recruiting process. The lack of oversight from the DCOPs and ANP chains-of-command have created environments where the ALP can abuse their positions without adverse consequences. The USSOF are responsible for the training and equipping of the ALP, but typically refrain from becoming involved with Afghan civil matters. USSOF are required to report violations through both U.S. channels and to DCOP and the Ministry of the Interior (MOI). ALP abuse of power has contributed to most of the poor public perception of the

ALP program and significantly undermined ALP effectiveness in many areas. The British experienced the same problems when the Malayan police force was expanded. The Malayan police force received minimal training and lacked competent leadership, often resulting in the police force “abusing the population.”²⁰ Upon reaching a stalemate against the CPM insurgency, the British changed their strategy by reforming and retraining the entire Malayan police force to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Corruption

Corruption, as part of the abuse of power, is prevalent throughout all of Afghan society and systems, and is perhaps the most challenging issue confronting VSO, especially the ALP. According to the Transparency International 2012 Corruption Perception Index, Afghanistan ranks as the third most corrupt country among 176 countries.²¹ In a 2009 survey about the populations perception of the police, “49% thought the police were controlling crime in their area, but 42% reported that gifts and bribes were required when interacting with police and 54% felt it was not worth reporting crime to the police because off perceived likely inaction.”²² Corruption in the ALP begins from the time that vetted recruits begin training and throughout their term of service as an ALP member. Each VSP experiences various problems with ALP corruption in their respective training academies. In order to deter and combat corruption, USSOF trains and teaches the ALP to be a professional force. The training and education the ALP receive is designed to outline the ALP responsibilities and duties. The local community is involved throughout the ALP process from recruitment to graduation. The community understands the roles and responsibilities of the ALP and grievances are presented to the USSOF responsible for their training and oversight. The District Governor and the District Chief

of Police are also made aware of any problems and accountable to administer the appropriate punishments. Corruption is pervasive not only in the ALP, but throughout the judiciary branch which has decreased public trust in the government, particularly the security sector.²³ Corruption in the ALP, the government, as well as throughout Afghan society, will continue to erode the capabilities of Afghanistan and further prevent the establishment of a stable, effective government and nation.

Corruption was problematic for the British in Malaya as the Malayan police forces “fell into corrupt practices. . . . The population regarded the police as hostile; they were reluctant to give them information on the insurgents.”²⁴ The solution for the British was to retrain and educate the Malayan police force in order to make the police a more professional organization. Once this was accomplished, the Malayan population built trust in the police and began to provide the police with information and intelligence. A professionally trained force is more likely not to abuse power and build trust among the population. In order to eliminate the internal threat of corruption, the ALP will require additional training focusing on professionalism and ethics. Once the British revamped the Malayan police training, the Communist insurgency was rapidly degraded, British forces began to withdraw forces, and the Malaysians were capable of conducting COIN operations as the British transitioned responsibility to the Malayan government.²⁵ Unless the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) takes measures to increase the professionalism of the ALP, then corruption will continue to perpetuate throughout areas with ALP. The corruption problem goes beyond the ALP, but is pervasive throughout Afghan government and society. Corruption alone may be the most significant challenge for Afghanistan in developing an effective government and stable society.

Messaging

A challenge throughout much of Afghanistan is the perception of villagers regarding police forces. For example in Helmand Province during a 2010 survey, villagers main concerns were “lack of security, fear of the Taliban, and the threatened curtailment of their opium cultivation activities . . . Police abuses . . . were also major worries for many people.”²⁶ In Kunduz Province villagers cited that “physical security, economic factors and education . . . lack of security (was) keeping children from school and job-seekers from working in permanent jobs.”²⁷ The survey responses indicate that there is a perception of security threats from the Taliban and from “police abuses.” As Afghanistan increases the number of security forces and coalition forces transition security responsibilities to the ANSF, this perception must be addressed through a combination of information and practice. The Ministry of the Interior (MOI), in conjunction with all ANSF, to include ALP, must continue to use a positive information campaign to persuade and influence to population that the police forces are there to protect the people. Additionally, the ALP must conduct themselves appropriately as a professional force, fair, impartial, and capable, not another corrupt security entity that abuses their power. During the Malayan Emergency, the British government hosted Malayan civilians to tour Malaya and see the success of the counterinsurgency efforts. The tours demonstrated the effectiveness of the Malayan police, displayed the development ongoing in Malaya, and legitimized the Malayan government. Once the people returned home, they shared their experiences and observations with friends and family which positively influenced public opinion of the British and Malayan government. VSO can benefit from messaging similar to the Malayan civilians. The ALP

must make every effort to demonstrate professionalism and proficiency among the local population. Every project or program with regards to development should be advertised as appropriate with the emphasis on the benefits that are provided to the Afghan people. Afghan government officials must interface with the population, and incorporate the ALP and development into messages to the public. Aggressive messaging from the Afghans will prove effective to positively influence the population, and reinforce positive views of the aspects of VSO, while help countering any Taliban propaganda.

Literacy

The illiteracy rate among ALP is over 90 percent, with some government officials citing illiteracy as high as 98 percent.²⁸ Article 22 of the Procedure on the Regulation and Establishment of the ALP requires three weeks to teach reading and writing, but the quality and effectiveness of this limited amount of contact time varies from one ALP academy to another.²⁹ The high illiteracy rate complicates the process of creating a more professional ALP as training is relegated to visual, verbal, and hands on methods. Programs have been implemented, such as the Afghan Literacy Program, in which instructors travel to ALP locations and teach reading and writing to the ALP. Literacy programs have proven in some areas to improve the behavior of ALP members and enabled ALP to carry out their responsibilities. In Kunduz Province the training improved the treatment of public people and the fulfillment of their obligations.³⁰ If the high illiteracy rate remains at current levels, then the ALP may likely fail to become a professional local defense force, continue to abuse their power, and commit human rights violations. Corruption will continue to be pervasive as educational and employment opportunities to ALP members will be limited due to illiteracy. Addressing the ALP

illiteracy, as well as overall illiteracy among rural Afghans, will positively impact the lives of Afghans, providing more opportunities. Education and literacy have long been goals of militaries conducting counterinsurgencies. The Americans in the Philippines and the British in Malaya exemplified the importance of education and literacy and addressed these issues by constructing schools and establishing training programs for educators. VSO has been responsible for the construction of schools and for creating programs to improve literacy among ALP and provide educational opportunities to Afghans.

Logistics and Resources

The ALP is dependent on the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) logistical infrastructure which is incapable of operating independently without coalition support. The MOI has established Regional Logistics Centers (RLC) and Provincial Supply Points (PSP), but are currently understaffed, and inexperienced and undertrained in MOI logistics procedures. In an U.S. Department of Defense Inspector General (DODIG) report, dated 9 July 2012, an assessment of the MOI logistics identified that “The MOI logistics system did not provide timely support to the ALP program.”³¹ The U.S. DODIG identified problems with the MOI logistical system as early as March 2009 reporting insufficient number of coalition logistics mentoring personnel, hoarding and corruption that undermined the logistical system effectiveness, and lack of adequate transportation infrastructure.³² The impacts of inadequate ALP logistical support has several adverse impacts that effect readiness, operational deployment, and safety. The shortfalls of the MOI logistical system require that USSOF support ALP when possible, however, ALP readiness remains adversely effected. The other adverse consequence the mistrust the ALP have in the ANP that develops due to the lack of transparency and the perception

that the ALP receives minimal logistical support because the ALP are the inferior force among the ANSF. In a RAND National Defense Research Institute paper one USSOF team “experienced an 8-month delay in supplies of weapons, ammo, and uniforms for the ALP recruits.”³³ Logistics is often overlooked in military operations, but for VSO, logistical support for the ALP is essential in order to for effective security operations. The MOI logistical system and infrastructure requires significant overhaul and oversight in order to support ANSF. Coalition forces efforts have continued to train and establish systems to increase MOI logistics capabilities. The logistical system problem is further complicated by previously mentioned problems to include illiteracy, corruption, and abuse of power. Both the ALP and staff illiteracy result in the inability to request support and resupply, or comply with written supply requests. Corrupt Afghan government and security officials pilfer supplies as shipments are transferred from logistic hubs to the intended Afghan recipients. During this process in the supply chain, officials abuse their power by hoarding the supplies and equipment. Normally, conducting inventories would alleviate the problems with accountability, but due to the high illiteracy rate in the ANSF inventories would be very challenging. The MOI logistical system requires significant improvement to increase efficiency and create transparency in the process. The dysfunctional logistical system currently supporting the ALP will become further ineffective after 2014 unless modifications are made to the current system.

The 2014 Transition

By the end of 2014, U.S. forces are expected to depart Afghanistan and the Afghan government will be responsible for security. The ALP program was designed to be a “temporary” solution to counter the Taliban in rural areas of strategic importance.

Considering the “true” capabilities of the ANSF, the ANP may not be prepared to assume the responsibility of training, equipping, mentoring, and managing the ALP once USSOF departs. An additional problem is funding supporting the ANSF will be reduced. The plan for transition should consider the elimination of funding and the reduced capacity for the ANSF if ALP are disbanded.

Can VSO be applied to other operational environments?

Recently, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) published ARSOF 2022,³⁴ which is essentially a blueprint for the future of ARSOF. ARSOF 2022 describes the future operating environment as the following:

This new world will be characterized by an irregular balance of power between both state and non-state actors. It will present a dynamic operating environment that is characterized by uncertainty. The shift in the nation’s tolerance away from large-scale joint operations, coupled with the complexity of the future operating environment, create a growing gap between national action and inaction – this changing dynamic could give our adversaries broader freedom of action and encourage increased instability. The reality of this changing paradigm requires USASOC and the U.S. Special Operations Command to build new strategic options for the nation. Future threats will range from standing conventional and unconventional forces to irregular militias and paramilitaries to terrorist groups, criminal elements and any number of hybrids. The interaction of several variables within the environment, including human behavior, assures both fog and friction. We will increasingly act in multi-dimensional, hybrid operating environments, which will require the force to operate within, and seamlessly shift between, ethnic enclaves in the center of sprawling megacities and austere rural villages.³⁵

As indicated in ARSOF 2022, the future operational environments will be extremely complex with an array of threats ranging from conventional forces to terrorists, and an assortment of hybrid threats consisting of multiple threats. The operational environment is also characterized by fiscal constraints and the American public’s intolerance for a long-scale conventional war following over a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Therefore, due to limited resources, will of the people, and the multitude of

threats, VSO is a feasible solution in current and future operational environments. The VSO methodology can be applied to conduct a wide array of missions to include COIN operations, counterterrorism (CT), unconventional warfare (UW), and foreign internal defense (FID). However, the potential consequences of a VSO type approach must be carefully considered which will be explained further with examples from Colombia, Pakistan, India, and Iraq. There are risks involved when training an indigenous defense force for the purpose of imposing security and the rule of law, particularly if there are ethnic, cultural, or tribal divisions and high illiteracy rates.

The VSO methodology developed and evolved from practical lessons learned from historical counterinsurgencies, recent experiences in Iraq, and from predecessors of the ALP program. Despite the ranging views on the level of success that the VSO program has achieved, VSO utilizes proven doctrine and replicates best practices in counterinsurgency. Therefore, the VSO model can be effective in other locations within the contemporary operational environment and in future conflicts. However, as each VSO location is unique, so is each COIN operation. The results and outcomes of each counterinsurgency throughout history is unique, but remains constant is the heart of the doctrine and the basic counterinsurgency principles that are applied to defeat an insurgency. Several contemporary examples of the use of local defense forces provides lessons for considering the use of an auxiliary police force or militia. The Government of Pakistan has experienced success with using a myriad of tribal police, militias, community police, paramilitary corps, and constabularies in Pashtun areas of Pakistan, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (KPK), and along the Afghan border.³⁶ Pakistan

experienced varying success with the use of the local defense forces, but each force is built around homogenous tribes in order to reduce ethnic conflict. Additionally, the Pakistani approach is to use militias that are accepted by the various tribes as a security solution in the tribal areas. During Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the U.S. and coalition forces established Sunni militias, ‘neighborhood watch’ units, and Concerned Local Citizens (CLC) in Anbar Province to address security concerns.³⁷ The programs were considered successful in augmenting the Iraqi Police and resulted in many of the Iraqi’s involved being recruited into the Iraqi Police. However, success in Iraq is partly attributed to the homogeneous tribal structure which differs from the more dynamic and heterogeneous tribal demographics in Afghanistan. Careful human terrain analysis and an understanding of the demographics is critical when implementing a program such as VSO. Pakistan has approached security in the tribal areas with different local defense programs, whereas in Iraq, the Sunnis were able to augment the Iraqi Police with the same type of programs.

There are examples of how local defense forces and militias failed to defeat an insurgency, committed human rights abuses, and pose threats to stability as a result of not demobilizing. In 1997, the Colombian government established the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) from various militias and paramilitary groups to conduct COIN operations against the Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).³⁸ In 2003, the government signed a peace accord with the FARC, and disbanded the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC).³⁹ However, several of the militias and paramilitary organizations refused to demobilize. The illegal militias and paramilitary groups infiltrated the legitimate government, and to this day, continue to commit human rights

violations, and are associated with organized crime. Careful consideration must be made as to when and who should comprise a militia and a demobilization process must be implemented that will not further destabilize a country.

The Government of India uses militias to augment the police and military with success to conduct COIN operations against Kashmiri and Naxalite insurgents.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, in the past militias called ‘Special Police’ have committed human rights violations and in some cases were defeated by the insurgents. In response, the Indians have developed structures to improve police and community relationships, and incorporated training and education programs to professionalize the police. The Indians have incorporated lessons learned, and involved International Government Organizations (IGO) and Non-governmental Organizations (NGO), in order to provide oversight to the police. The Indians also employ a whole-of-government approach to increase accountability and oversight, which is parallel to VSO, and actions taken in the Philippines War and the Malayan Emergency.

The VSO model may be best applied to prior to an insurgency taking hold in rural areas, or within a framework where no insurgent conventional force exists, but where an insurgency may be in its infancy. In such environments, VSO can establish a local defense force and assist in addressing civil vulnerabilities through governance and development initiatives. The VSO in Afghanistan is effective because most attacks conducted by the Taliban, insurgents, and criminal elements against ALP and VSPs consisted of improvised explosive devices (IED), or small-scale attacks. The capabilities of the ALP, with USSOF assistance, enables the ALP to protect themselves against most Taliban attacks when properly equipped. The VSO model contributes to improved

governance capacity, that without USSOF involvement, many rural areas would never have benefited from increased interaction with the district government. VSO has contributed to economic development, education opportunities, and provided initiatives and programs that have improved the lives of Afghans. The holistic approach of VSO can counter the efforts of insurgents, terrorists, criminals, and other malign actors.

A VSO methodology is a cost-effective approach to increase security capacity and for economic and social development. For example, cost effectiveness is achieved in VSO with an ALP salary that is 40 percent less than the pay of ANP and the small footprint of USSOF at VSPs versus the footprint of a large conventional force.⁴¹ In the current constrained fiscal environment makes the VSO a viable option as the lower cost for a militia or local security force can augment a national police. Within the VSO construct, development initiatives can be achieved through IGOs, NGOs, and GOs that can provide cost sharing and enduring benefits that address civil vulnerabilities. The past decade has provided ample opportunity for military and humanitarian organizations to cooperate addressing instability throughout the world making enabling future cooperation a feasible option.

Interpretation of Findings

The comparison of the Philippines War, Malayan Emergency, and VSO in Afghanistan determined that a local defense force, or militia, is critical in establishing and maintaining security. Mentoring, advising, and empowering the local government is equally essential as once transition occurs, the indigenous government will be left responsible for security, governance, and development. Development is the third component common in the three comparisons as in all cases the lack of opportunities

contributed to the insurgencies. The counterinsurgents in all cases focused efforts in the areas of security, governance, and development to effectively defeat the insurgencies.

Understanding demographics, human terrain, history, and cultural characteristics of an area and population are critical in counterinsurgencies. Both the insurgents and the counterinsurgents are competing for support of the population. The side that gains the support of the population ultimately wins, but in order to win one must understand the population. The Americans initially failed to understand that the insurrectos in the Philippines desired independence from colonial rule, while the British failed to consult the Malaysians upon instituting a new constitution and address the perceived deprivation between the ethnic Chinese and Malaysians that was perpetuated during the Japanese invasion. USSOF, and the coalition in Afghanistan failure to ensure that village councils approved and vetted the ALP created the perception, and reality in some cases, that the ALP are dysfunctional with members committing human rights violations and abusing their power. USSOF also neglected to consider how warlords and previous regimes have historically used variants of militias to impose their will upon the Afghans, and the Afghans have not forgotten their recent history.

Geography is a significant factor for both insurgents and counterinsurgents. David Galula wrote, “The role of geography, a large one in an ordinary war, may be overriding in a revolutionary war. If the insurgent . . . cannot get help from geography, he may well be condemned to failure before he starts.”⁴² The insurgency had difficulty expanding in the Philippines because the country is an archipelago. The Communist Party of Malaya insurgents were forced further into the mountainous jungles of the interior of the Malayan peninsula resulting in their starvation and isolation from any support. Geographically,

Afghanistan is different due to being landlocked with a boundary shared with six countries. The porous boundary enabled external support to penetrate the boundaries which is why many foreign fighters came to Afghanistan to join the Taliban fight against the coalition. The porous boundary also permits Taliban fighters to seek refuge in neighboring Pakistan.

In the Philippines War and Malayan Emergency, the insurgents were not beneficiaries of external support from foreign states or organizations, except for the moral support the CPM derived from Communist China. Afghanistan is a stark contrast in that several state and non-state actors provide support to the Taliban in the form of financing, materiel, training, and personnel. Iran, Pakistan, as well other Muslim nations allegedly provide support to the Taliban. The insurrectos and the CPM guerillas did not have external support which is a factor that enabled the counterinsurgents. In the current operational environment, insurgent organizations commonly receive external support from state actors and other organizations. The Taliban differ from the Philippine insurrectos and the CPM guerillas because of the external support and funding coming from narcotics trafficking, materiel, and foreign fighters pouring into Afghanistan. The expansion of global Islamism, or Islamic fundamentalism, has created a support network throughout Africa, the Middle East, and Asia for insurgents, terrorists, and criminals. The impacts of external support and effects of support networks must be carefully considered when planning counterinsurgencies. Arguably, globalization and technological advancements in communications and travel have increased the ability for networked support. The insurrectos and CPM did not benefit from the advantages of 21st century technologies and connectivity as the Taliban.

Inform and influence activities are critical component of any military operation, or endeavor that requires support from the population. The British pursued an active information campaign against the CPM guerillas to influence the population to support the Malayan government. In Afghanistan, inform and influence activities are important in promoting the benefits of VSO and the effectiveness of the ALP. Information operations are critical in disseminating information from the district government to the village level. The VSO implementation would have benefitted with a better understanding of the intent and purpose of the program, and a better understanding by the Afghans as to what VSO and the ALP program entailed. The VSO rollout was conducted without some Afghans understanding the purpose and procedural details of the programs.

The most challenging aspect of COIN is determining a measure of success. While conducting stability operations some commanders measure success by the amount of enemy killed or captured, number of schools built, and amount of money spent on development projects. While these measurements are indicators, measuring success in COIN is most challenging. Comparing the differences and similarities of COIN operations produces obvious successful and unsuccessful practices, but there are significant factors that affect operations. In analyzing any military operation, particularly COIN, one must ensure that while the application of doctrine is important, comprehending the factors that influence and effect COIN operations is critical in determining the level of success. The proper application of doctrine does not yield the same results in each COIN operation. COIN operations are unique, so while an understanding of doctrine is important, the ability to change or modify the strategy is more important. In each of the case studies, the counterinsurgents modified strategies to

obtain positive results. The British effectively modified their strategy in Malaya becoming a “learning institution” capable of turning the war in the favor of the British.⁴³ CJSOTF-A also demonstrated the ability to be a learning institution in modifying the local defense forces in ultimately establishing the ALP. Success in military operations may take time to measure, but success is indicative in the ability of military forces to develop doctrine and adjust strategy to defeat an enemy.

The Unexpected Findings

The most unexpected finding is the impact that globalization has and will continue to have on insurgencies throughout the world. There are numerous threats from traditional nation states, but the immediate and future threats are failed states suffering from instability due to economic underdevelopment, particularly in places where globalization has no effects. Globalization has improved the quality of life for people, created economic growth, and employment opportunities. Globalization enables the sharing of ideas, freedom of movement for people, and improves the standard of living for people. E.M. Burlingame wrote in the Small Wars Journal, “The desired endstate of VSO and Venture Capital investment are the same, to develop a stable asset out of next to nothing . . . if VSO is to be successful . . . each ODA must master the VC skillset and become masters at creating wealth and non-welfare state jobs.”⁴⁴ Comparing VSO and Venture Capitalists views counterinsurgency from a business-model perspective and considering the current financial situation of the world is appropriate. Therefore, the business-model approach for applying VSO to future counterinsurgencies is appropriate and arguably necessary. E. M. Burlingame’s concept implies that USSOF must become successful venture capitalists, to create wealth out of nothing. Successful VSOs, like

successful venture capital investments, create sustainable entities that improve their positions for the stakeholders and ultimately increase in value. This finding supports the recommendation that in a fiscally constrained, complex environment, USSOF should adopt a venture capitalist approach when applying a VSO methodology to future counterinsurgencies.

Additionally, the effect of geography and lack of external support on the Philippines War and the Malayan Emergency may be coincidental, but are considerable factors in both cases. The question to ask is whether or not insurgencies are more likely to succeed when they share borders that can serve as lines of communication, supply routes, and refuge. Likewise, the lack of external support to the insurrectos and the CPM guerillas effected the ability of both insurgencies to accomplish their objectives. Would the Taliban had been as successful if Afghanistan was an island, archipelago, or peninsula like Malaya and the Philippines? Is external support of any significance if support is obtained domestically from the civilian population?

Recommendations

Considerations for Further Study

Village Stability Operations is an obscure topic for most of the Department of Defense and interagency who are not involved in the Special Operations community, but deserves further study, particularly within the classified area. Much of the information that would provide a better understanding of the success of VSO is currently classified. This study compares VSO to historical counterinsurgencies and uses unclassified materials to determine success and effectiveness of VSO. A classified study using

classified materials from reports, intelligence analyses, interviews, and other data would provide a better understanding of VSO effectiveness.

The comparison of VSO to more contemporary case studies would be more relevant to this thesis. Examples include many of the nation assistance and security force assistance operations currently conducted in Africa and South America.

A future assessment of VSO locations in Afghanistan may also provide information to measure the success of VSO by determining the level of security in an area, the ability of the district government to positively impact villages, and the economic impacts of development projects. The metrics obtained combined with an analysis of the data would provide a much more reliable indicator of VSO successes.

Unanswered Questions

Throughout the three historical COIN examples, there is an abundance of information available for the security aspect, but limited detailed information about development initiatives and programs. Significant open source information is available with data, statistics, and metrics for local defense forces, but minimal on development. Each case provides examples of some development initiatives and programs, but none provide information to the same level and depth that is found with regards to security. In all three COIN examples, the importance of development is emphasized and explanations of how development was implemented is apparent, but the information is not equivalent to that available for the security sector.

Different Approaches

This thesis used a historical comparison for analysis, but the study could have consisted of interviews with USSOF personnel who conducted VSO to determine effectiveness. Interviews were considered for this study, but as each VSO is unique, so is each VSO practitioner. There is also a risk that the perceptions of the USSOF may not be congruent with the actual situation at their respective VSO site. Most importantly, the interviews are susceptible to receiving a higher security classification beyond unclassified. In order to eliminate the risk of any personal bias or the legal requirement to conduct this study as a classified product, interviews were not conducted.

Another approach that may have been more applicable to studying the success and failures of using local defense forces or militias would be to compare more contemporary examples in Africa, Asia, and South America. The specific case studies used in this thesis spanned over the course of over a century, and included participation by both Americans and British. The study may have been more beneficial in comparing contemporary COIN conducted by a single military force within a single government. Such a comparison would have yielded more current and relevant results, eliminating the drastic differences in politics, culture, doctrine, and circumstances associated with different eras.

Following the anticipated withdrawal of coalition forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2014, Afghans will be responsible for their own security and economic development. Various sources indicate that an American advisory force may remain thereafter. In order to determine the effectiveness of VSO, and to identify the lessons learned, it is important to continue and monitor Afghanistan in the coming years. The immediate impacts of VSO may not be fully understood or measurable for a few years.

Therefore, to understand the impacts of VSO, further research is recommended to determine the effects that VSO had on shaping security, governance, and development.

Summary and Conclusion

In the past, the United States often assumed the primary role of defending others: we built bases, we deployed large forces across the globe to fixed positions; we often assumed that others were not willing or capable of defending themselves . . . our new strategy recognizes that this is not the world we live in anymore.⁴⁵

The commonalities that the Philippines War, the Malayan Emergency, and VSO in Afghanistan share is that the counterinsurgents approached the problems of the insurgencies along the lines of security, governance, and development. All three counterinsurgents understood the importance of establishing a local defense force to improve the security in a specific area. Each counterinsurgent understand the importance of a representative government, capable of self-rule and assuming responsibility for governance. Each counterinsurgent used the tools of development to improve economic conditions, while improving the quality of life for the vulnerable populations. Each counterinsurgent understood the basic principles of counterinsurgency; that it is critical to separate the insurgents from the population and that the key to success is ultimately winning over the population. Most importantly, each counterinsurgent demonstrated the ability to learn and adapt from previous mistakes, often drastically changing strategy.

The current and future operational environment is characterized as fiscally constrained, complex, and complicated. The significance of studying VSO and past counterinsurgencies is that the complexity of the world, competition for resources, and the nature of globalization will continue to create conditions throughout the world which create instability. Malign actors, be it insurgents, terrorists, criminal organizations,

guerillas, rogue states, dictators, or some other group, will determine the need to resort to armed conflict to resolve differences, consolidate power, or attain resources. As a response to these events, the VSO model may be provide an appropriate model. VSO is directly applicable to foreign Internal Defense and Development Plans (IDAD) and encompasses other mission to include Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Unconventional Warfare (UW), COIN, Counterterrorism (CT), Humanitarian Assistance (HA), Nation Assistance (NA), and Security Force Assistance (SFA). While FID, UW, and CT are historically SOF missions, the future of conventional forces will involve the conduct of SFA. As the U.S. Army conventional forces become regionally aligned, SFA will most likely become a cornerstone mission for the regionally aligned forces especially as part of broader Internal Defense and Development plans. SOF will continue conducting UW, COIN, CT, and FID, but the deployments of regionally align forces may resemble that similar to VSPs conducting VSO in Afghanistan. Therefore, conventional forces may be conducting 'VSO type' operations under the auspices of SFA under the IDAD umbrella. The VSO model, as compared to successful COIN operations, can be applied to FID, UW, CT, NA, and SFA, as well as stability operations and nation building in the complex and complicated operational environment of today and tomorrow.⁴⁶

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³⁷*Ibid.*, 33-34.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 34.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 40.

⁴¹Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU), 15.

⁴²David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (St. Petersburg, FL Hailer Publishing, 2005), 35.

⁴³John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya to Vietnam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 107.

⁴⁴E. M. Burlingame, "Irregular Warfare, Village Stability Operations and the Venture Capital Green Beret," *Small Wars Journal*, 14 May 2012, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/irregular-warfare-village-stability-operations-and-the-venture-capital-green-beret> (accessed 27 October 2013).

⁴⁵Leon Panetta, U.S. Institute of Peace, 28 June

GLOSSARY

Al-Qaeda. a loosely-knit militant Islamic organization led and funded by Osama bin Laden, by whom it was established in the late 1980s from Arab volunteers who had fought the Soviet troops previously based in Afghanistan; known or believed to be behind a number of operations against Western, especially US, interests, including bomb attacks on two US embassies in Africa in 1998 and the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York in 2001.¹

Arbakai. Tribal based community policing system grounded in volunteer grassroots initiatives.²

Counterinsurgency (COIN). Those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency.³

Foreign Internal Defense (FID). (Joint) Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency (JP 1-02)⁴

Guerrilla. (DoD definition): A combat participant in guerrilla warfare. (Dictionary definition): A member of an irregular, usually indigenous military or paramilitary unit that operates in small units and uses guerrilla warfare.⁵

Insurgency. (Joint) An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict (JP 1-02)⁶

Insurgent. (DOD) Member of a political party who rebels against the established leadership.⁷

Internal Defense and Development (IDAD). The full range of measures taken by a nation to promote its growth and to protect itself from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. It focuses on building viable institutions (political, economic, social, and military) that respond to the needs of society.⁸

Jihad. 1. An individual's striving for spiritual self-perfection, 2. A Muslim holy war or spiritual struggle against infidels, 3. A crusade or struggle.⁹

Jirga. A tribal council responsible for settling disputes in Afghanistan and Pakistan¹⁰

Malik. A person of authority in India and some parts of Asia Minor¹¹

Mujahedeen (mujahidin) – Muslim guerrilla warriors engaged in a jihad; one who fights in a jihad¹²

Shura. 1. A consultative council or assembly, 2. The process of decision-making by consultation and deliberation¹³

Security Force Assistance (SFA). The unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, Host Nation, or regional security forces in support of legitimate authority (FM 3-07).¹⁴

Stability Operations (SO). (Joint) An overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or re-establish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief (JP 3-0).¹⁵

Taliban. A fundamentalist Islamic army: in 1996 it defeated the ruling *mujahidin* factions and seized control of the country; overthrown in 2001 by US-led forces, although resistance continues, especially in the south.¹⁶

Terrorist. An individual who uses violence, terror, and intimidation to achieve a result.¹⁷

Unconventional Warfare (UW). A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with, and by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery (JP 1-02).¹⁸

¹The Collins English Dictionary, <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/al-qaeda> (accessed 21 November 2013).

²Mohammed Osman Tariq, "Tribal Security System (Arbakai) in Southwest Afghanistan," Crisis States Occasional Papers, Crisis States Research Centre, Destin Development Studies Institute, December 2008, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=95106>, (accessed 5 April 2013).

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, April 2009), Glossary-10.

⁶Ibid., Glossary-11.

⁷Ibid., Glossary-19.

⁸Ibid., Glossary-12.

⁹*The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 730.

¹⁰The Collins English Dictionary, <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/jirga>, (accessed 1 July 2013).

¹¹The Collins English Dictionary, <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/malik> (accessed 1 July 2013).

¹²*The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 895.

¹³The Collins English Dictionary, <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/shura> (accessed 1 July 2013).

¹⁴Ibid., Glossary-18.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid,

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., Glossary-20.

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